

Town Board Meeting

Zoom Video-conference

July 9, 2020

Supervisor Mettler states that pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 202.1, this meeting is being conducted via video conference. The invitation to the meeting has been posted, the public is present, and they are both able to see and hear and they will be invited to speak at the Open Forum. There will be minutes for this meeting and this meeting will be recorded.

Members Present: Supervisor Mettler, Councilperson Wolf, Councilperson Gansowski, and Councilperson Sullivan.

Call to Order

Supervisor Mettler opens the Town Board meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Councilperson Sullivan and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to approve and accept the Minutes as written for the June 11, 2020 Town Board Meeting and the June 23, 2020 Special Town Board Meeting.

All in favor. Motion was approved.

Announcements

Supervisor Mettler reports that a representative from the Columbia County Office for the Aging will be at the Town Hall parking lot on June 22, 2020 to distribute Farmer's Market coupons to anyone who is at least 60 years of age and meets the income guidelines. Everyone must wear a mask. For more information please contact the Columbia County Office for the Aging.

Correspondence

From-Charter Communications will have a change of venue on or around July 17, 2020

From-Charter Communications will be rebranding to Showtime Showcase on or around July 18, 2020

From-Grant Langdon- a letter dated June 11, 2020, a letter dated June 12, 2020, an email letter dated June 14, 2020, a letter dated June 15, 2020, a letter dated June 26, 2020, a letter dated June 28, 2020, an e-mail letter dated June 29, 2020, a letter dated June 29, 2020, a letter dated July 2, 2020, an email dated July 5, 2020, a letter dated July 6, 2020, and an email dated July 7, 2020

From-Gray Davis-an email letter regarding the Hecate Project, "Shepard's Run"

Supervisor's Report

Supervisor Mettler reports that this evening we will be hearing from Alex Campbell, a representative of Hecate Energy. As you know, Hecate is seeking to build a utility scale solar panel installation in Craryville. Hecate is proceeding under Article 10, and thus their application will be decided not by the Copake Planning Board, but rather by a seven member Board known as the Siting Board.

The Siting Board has five permanent members who are Commissioners and Chairpersons of such State entities as the DEC, the Department of Health and the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority. There are also two ad hoc members who are Copake residents. These members will “provide a local voice in the review of the project and vote on the final decision on the application.”

As Supervisor, it is my responsibility to nominate four candidates for these two seats. The Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors, Matt Murell may also nominate four. The final appointments are made as follows: One member is appointed by the President of the NYS Senate and one is appointed by the Leader of the Assembly.

The candidates whose names I will send to Albany is:

Leonard Barham
Stephen Futrell
Robert Haight
Edgar Masters

Each of these four individuals is highly qualified and deeply committed to Copake. I am honored to be able to put their names forward and thankful that they are willing to take on this significant civic responsibility.

Another matter which I want you to know about is that in view of all that has happened nationwide in the past several weeks, the Governor of the State of NY has issued an Executive Order which mandates every jurisdiction which has a police force to form a committee to “perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices, and develop a plan to improve those deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices” with the purpose of “addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness and legitimacy and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.”

Not only is this process mandated, but a report has to be filed no later than April 1, 2021 and the receipt of state and federal funds can be conditioned on the certification of a plan filed by the local government.

I am on the Public Safety Committee of Columbia County so I will certainly have familiarity with this process as we go forward. I hope that the County will view this as an important opportunity. If anyone wants further information on the formation of this new review Committee they should feel free to contact me

And finally, another County related matter, last night many of you received a rather sobering call or email from Chairman Murell.

The substance of the message from the Chairman- which was so important that he took the extreme measure of sending a message to every house registered with Code Red was that “Columbia County is

seeing a spike in the number of close contacts of those who have recently tested positive for COVID-19.” The Chairman’s message said: “The wider the spread, the greater the risk of seeing even more positive cases and hospitalizations. This will have a negative impact on our region’s reopening, our economy and the activities that are allowed.”

Thankfully, the number of cases in Copake as of this past Friday was 21, and it has been at 21 for several weeks. Likewise, the number of deaths countywide is still at 37.

Although we take hope and comfort in the fact that these numbers are flat, the numbers in the Count are not. We will close our meeting with a moment of silence for those who have died.

Presentation: Alex Campbell, Hecate Energy-Project Developer

Supervisor Mettler states Mr. Campbell reports that earlier this year, Hecate filed a Public Involvement Program, or “PIP”, with the state of New York. In that filing, Hecate promised that they would hold two public meetings in order to educate the public as to their proposal. Supervisor Mettler states that in turning the floor over to Mr. Campbell, she in no way concedes that this ten minute presentation fulfills the promises that Hecate made to New York State and to this community. Neither the post cards that were sent to some but not all of Copake residents, nor any remarks here tonight in any way absolves Hecate of their obligation to Copake residents.

Supervisor Mettler introduces Mr. Campbell and he will be given ten minutes to present to the Town Board.

Mr. Campbell thanks the Town for allowing him to speak tonight. He recognizes that this is not the best forum for him to introduce himself, but with all things considered, he felt it was the right time to say some words and properly introduce himself.

Mr. Campbell introduces himself and states that he has been coming to the Copake Town Board meetings since late last year excluding the month of February, again to the March Town Board meeting and then everything broke loose. Mr. Campbell is here tonight to say hello and to let everyone know that he is here tonight to listen to everyone and to be a conduit of information from Hecate Energy, from the Department of Public Service, and to answer any questions. Mr. Campbell realizes that there have been some concerns about what Supervisor Mettler had described where in their Public Involvement Program Plan, Hecate said they would provide two open house events during that period of time and as many people that did receive a Hecate postcard that said how they would address the current conditions where we can’t meet in person. Mr. Campbell continues to say that without having the ability to meet in person, they spoke with the Department of Public Service who is running the Article 10 process and asked them what Hecate could do to continue moving forward with the project but also engage the public in a way that they felt was acceptable. Hecate’s goal was to provide the same information that would have been presented at an open house forum but allow you to access the information on the internet, at the Copake Town Hall to distribute hard copies, or just call Hecate yourselves. Mr. Campbell states that the main thing here is that Hecate is not trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the people or the residents or anyone on the call, they are merely trying to offer a solution to the problem that we are facing now which is the virus and to how to go about our daily lives. Mr. Campbell continues to say that the main comment with the internet open house is that why can’t we just wait to have the public open house at another time? Mr. Campbell says that the uncertainty of when they can actually hold a public meeting is challenging and no one know the answer to that but

what he wants to stress is that he is here to answer questions in any form whether it be a call, an email, or even a Zoom call. Mr. Campbell encourages residents to contact him with any questions. Mr. Campbell states that regarding the Public Involvement Program Plan, people should know that the two open house in person meetings that were done on line and the ones that are expected to be had in the fall are not the only ones and to please contact him at any time, on any forum, he is here to help the public.

Mr. Campbell states that the next thing he would like to discuss is the Preliminary Scoping Statement. He states that the purpose of the Preliminary Scoping Statement unlike the Public Involvement Program is to present as much information that is reasonably possible at the time of the project and propose any methodology or studies or programs of studies that may be conducted over the course of this period so that the public can view all of this information and make sure that the public, the state, and the town feels comfortable with the things that are being studied and make sure that everybody's voice is heard and that in the end have a full suite of studies and results that they can analyze and address any issues that come along the way and all of those things then get wrapped up into an application which then they can eventually present in close coordination with the Town, to the Department of Public Service. After that phase, once the application is in, there is a very long period of time to review where the Department of Public Service, along with the two ad hoc members will review all materials and all of those materials will hopefully have a lot of input from anyone on this phone call, other stakeholders in this area or surrounding communities.

Mr. Campbell states that all of the comments that did come in from the internet open house were uploaded to the Hecate website.

Hecate Contact Information:

www.shepherdrunsolar.com

(833) 529-6597

Shepherd's Run Solar Farm
c/o Hecate Energy LLC
621 W. Randolph St.
Chicago, IL 60661

JULY SOLAR UPDATE Richard Wolf spoke next, giving an update on the Town's response to the proposed solar project.

Hecate has identified a 900-acre project area, most of which extends south from the intersection of State Route 23 and County Route 7. Hecate's proposal calls for the installation of 200,000 solar panels to generate 60 megawatts of electrical power, and may also include a group of 53'-long shipping containers housing lithium ion batteries to store electricity.

A large microphone has been placed on the west side of Route 7, just before you reach Birch Hill Road if you're driving south on 7. So we know that some testing is again occurring.

But here's what we DON'T KNOW...

We DON'T KNOW where Hecate will propose to site the solar panel arrays. We've been told that 500 acres will be needed for the 200,000 solar panels and related equipment. Access roads will need to be created. And we still DON'T KNOW whether Hecate will propose to create an energy storage facility on the north side of Route 23, east of the existing Craryville substation.

I think it is fair to say that thus far, there have been problems with Hecate's disseminating-of-information and gathering-of-local-input processes.

Mr. Campbell was quoted in the Columbia Paper, as saying, "Hecate doesn't do projects that don't include local input...we encourage and look for local input...it's just a good way to do business."

Unfortunately, however, inaction is speaking louder than words.

As I reported at last month's Board meeting, Hecate decided to go back on its written commitment to New York State to hold two in-person open house events before it files its next required document, a "Preliminary Scoping Statement", so that townspeople could meet with Hecate representatives, ask questions about the project, and offer comments and suggestions that might be incorporated into the document. Instead, Hecate mailed postcards to some Copake residents — not all. In fact, some folks who live very near the project area boundaries did not receive postcards. Those who DID get a postcard were invited to Hecate's website, a "virtual open house", where they could ask questions and comment. The website now lists exactly SEVEN questions and responses. That's it! The opportunity for Copake residents to consider Hecate's proposal as a group, to learn what their friends and neighbors are thinking, is missing — so far.

Another quote: to meet the states "aggressive renewables development mandates, projects need to find ways to continue development during these uncertain times." Hecate cites the pandemic and health concerns as the reason to forego the State Law's public participation requirements it said it would follow.

We all must remain vigilant and follow recommended health guidelines. We know that the State has been easing group meeting restrictions. The trajectory we seem to be on would suggest that soon it will be possible to have safe, in-person group gatherings. But in the meantime, if it really wants local input, Hecate could host a series of small discussion groups, with appropriate social distancing: mini, in-person, backyard "open houses" to both give information and get feedback about its proposal. Some residents have told me they are uncomfortable attending online meetings (like this one); others have poor internet access or none at all. Hecate should reach out to these folks — to everyone.

It is not unreasonable to expect Hecate to make more of an effort at outreach. It should wait until Copake residents are able to safely meet with Hecate at in-person open houses, as Hecate promised the State, and represented to the Town of Copake, would happen. Again I ask, what's the rush?

Let me conclude with a quick summary of what the Town Board has been doing.

1. We've previously reported that the Town has hired an attorney who specializes in advising towns who are "invited" to be "host communities" for industrial-size solar projects.
2. We soon will hire an environmental engineering firm to assist us in evaluating Hecate's Scoping Statement and to identify potential environmental impacts of the project on wetlands, wildlife, the view shed, and other concerns.

3. We will be applying for what are called “Intervenor Funds” — monies the State Law requires be put up by solar developers — to help us defray the costs of professional assistance to protect Copake’s interests.
4. We will hold an online Town Informational meeting on Thursday evening, July 30th at which our solar attorney will make a presentation.
5. We are planning a large, in-person meeting for Saturday morning, October 3rd, at the Taconic Hills Performing Arts Center.

Finally, a special edition of the Copake Connection will be dedicated to issues regarding Hecate’s proposed utility-size solar project. And we will use social media and other communications to keep everyone abreast of developments as they occur.

Thanks for your interest and your attention, and a special thanks to those of you who have reached out with questions and comments. Please keep them coming.

HECATE ENERGY Q & A

Supervisor Mettler opened the floor to questions from the audience.

Councilperson Gansowski, Copake resident, asks Mr. Campbell what is the rush to close this out without having public meetings?

Mr. Campbell agrees that small social groups for meetings suggested by Councilperson Wolf is a great alternative to having large numbered groups and he will look into doing so. As for what is the rush, Mr. Campbell states that there is no rush in public involvement and they have continued to answer questions and engage with people who have reached out. The plan is to have a robust in person meeting sometime in September as long as restrictions have been lifted and proper guidelines are in place. Mr. Campbell reiterates that this is an ongoing process and they are continually open to dialog on any forum.

Marcia Becker, Copake resident, asks if there is a preliminary or final complete site map and where is it?

Mr. Campbell states that there is not a preliminary or a final site map. That information is part of the documentation that has already been provided. Mr. Campbell continues on to say that one of the reasons they have publically noted that there are 900 acres that are being studied, (although Councilperson Wolf said the project area is 900 acres,) but in fact, if you read the public documents, it is the area that they are studying. The actual size of the project will be much smaller, probably less than half that size. With input from the public, they are trying to figure out where this project would best be suited.

Linda Senk, Copake resident asks Mr. Campbell what is the financial and energy benefit to the town of Copake by doing this and what kind of monies are going to be available to Copake besides the money given to the RoeJan Food Pantry by not having an in-house meeting. Mrs. Senk states that she knows many people who have not received the postcard and also that have no internet.

Ms. Senk asks that regarding what appears to be a rush, is there some kind of deadline to start this project that they are in such a rush to go through the public hearing or does it have to be started by a certain date or lose the ability to do the project that they are rushing through the public forum.

Mr. Campbell replies to Ms. Senk that the money to Copake will be in the form of taxes. They will work with both the county and the town to develop a tax payment schedule that everyone agrees with which has not yet been worked out but will be in the area of \$200,000-\$400,000.

Mr. Campbell replies to Ms. Senk that as far as deadlines go they do have a "RECC" Renewable Energy Credit Certificate contract with NYSERTA. The commercial operations date that they have is a date that they have in place right now and they don't expect that to be the deadline where they have to start today. Mr. Campbell states that they have plenty of time to work through the process and work with the town to work through the Article 10 permitting process which in it of itself will take more than two years. This is not a process that they will be able to start construction anytime soon and they are still in the early stages of this project development so there's a lot that we will learn and a lot that will change. Mr. Campbell then references to another project that they have in Albany and Green Counties has changed many times over the three years it's been in development and most of the changes are because of public involvement and public outreach.

Amy and Jay Schiff, Copake residents on Birch Hill Rd. states that they can walk to the microphone, they have internet, and has not received a postcard or any information and there is barely anyone on this call so clearly the outreach is not happening and they just found out about this call as it was starting from a neighbor.

Ms. Schiff then asks Mr. Campbell if he has research to share from other communities where they have taken 500-900 acres of land and taken away the trees and put in these solar panels about how our real estate prices are going to be reduced because their \$200,000 to \$400,000 of taxes which already the people who own that land are already paying some kind of taxes that we could probably lose way more than that in real estate values on our houses so she would like to know if Mr. Campbell has these studies to share from other neighborhoods where Hecate has done these projects.

Mr. Schiff asks Mr. Campbell if there will be any kind of vegetation of coverage?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that as far as property values and research on those property values and what solar may or may not do to property values is that the studies that Hecate has seen from financial consultants, development consultants, and from other groups, the National Labs, they have not seen any studies that have shown adverse effects on property values but encourages to send him any studies that anyone has found.

Mr. Schiff asks if there has or has not been a study and if Mr. Campbell can send him a copy of these studies. Mr. Campbell states that he has not done a study personally but groups that are far better at this work have done studies and Mr. Campbell will send the study when he gets contact information after Mr. Schiff contacts Mr. Campbell at www.shepardsrunsolar.com.

Mr. Campbell states that it is important that dialog goes through the proper channels so that they can be logged and then go on to the Department of Public Service.

Abigail, Copake Falls resident asks Mr. Campbell to tell us specifically the process used to determine who postcards will be sent to.

Mr. Campbell replies with they have a general study area that is roughly 900 acres right now and very much looks like a blob and that blob is much larger than the project will actually be. The Article 10 process calls for is they ask for all people to be notified of an open house event that are within a two mile radius of the blob. Since they had the virtual open house, they wanted to reach more people so they extended it to two and a half miles which added another thousand people roughly. The postcards were sent to about 2700 households and PO Boxes.

Councilperson Sullivan, Copake resident who is on the School Board as well as the Town Board and is in the process of informing the people in the school that this project is taking place and states that if there is anything Mr. Campbell needs or needs a venue, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Councilperson Sullivan wants to know if Mr. Campbell has reached out to any of the local fire districts in the area and states that the local fire departments are volunteer and that they are an important piece of some of the safety issues that she has concerns with. Councilperson Sullivan also thinks it is important to reach out to the surrounding towns for their input and not just through the Copake Connection.

Councilperson Sullivan thanks everyone for being here tonight.

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that he has been in contact with Mr. Howard and would love to engage on the stadium in ways they could do their next open house there.

Paul Parzuchowski, Copake resident states that it is really important to get a large group of people that this will affect to all hear each other's concerns. He did not receive the postcard and the communication is horrible. Mr. Parzuchowski would hope that when Mr. Campbell gets input, positive or negative about the project that he will adjust accordingly to have more buy in from the community.

Gray Davis, Copake resident states that when looking on line for information which has been fairly limited and difficult but talking about the property of 900 acres and there are 500 acres of which will be used for solar panels that is equal to 378 football fields. Mr. Davis thinks that it would be great if there were a site plan as well that notes where the panels will be located, thinking about setbacks, and view sheds, etc. Mr. Campbell also mentioned about the battery storage facilities from the energy that is produced that are 53 ft. long shipping container size units. Is there a count of how many there are and where they will be located. Mr. Davis thinks that something of this scale that is fifty times what is allowed by code. How does Hecate come to a reason that this is an appropriate place for this project to be located?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that the size question of 500 acres on the final project size roughly Mr. Campbell thinks will be less. It includes setback from the fence, access roads, and the actual panel coverage won't be anything near 400,000-500,000. That is just the amount of inclusive land that will be "inside the fence." Mr. Campbell states that they are still trying to move around and figure it out. As far as the proximity to a substation like the Craryville substation is key for projects like this and key for NYS and they are trying their best to do everything they can to mitigate climate change and projects like this dramatically help those impacts and to mitigate those impacts. If they were to try and find a different project at a different site that was far from a substation it becomes a very challenging process. Mr. Campbell states that they have a landowner that said they are excited to work with them and are willing to lease their land to us.

Regarding the battery storage front, Mr. Campbell states that the general thesis of where we are today is something they are considering but is a far off option at this phase. Mr. Campbell states that there is a lot of regulatory frameworks that NYS is trying to figure out with storage and there are a lot of things that the Town can benefit with storage and they are in the process of working out issues.

Mr. Campbell then responds to Mr. Schiff's earlier question regarding vegetation. On the studies that are being conducted right now, they are studying what the natural environment looks like with leaves or without leaves. They are trying to see what the ambient conditions are again for areas where there may be panels or where they may site panels so that if there are visible spots so they can yes, plant trees or native vegetation.

Mr. Campbell then responds to Councilperson Sullivan's question regarding the Copake and Craryville fire departments and states that he did meet with Bill Baker, Fire Chief in Craryville in January. Mr. Campbell and Fire Chief Baker covered general safety precautions and Fire Chief Baker asked Mr. Campbell makes sure they know how to get into the power facility, to make sure where the critical components are and any type of training that may be provided to let Fire Chief Baker know so he can coordinate with the right people.

Roberta Roll, Copake resident would like to know about the electricity that is generated (60mw). Where will it go and who will it serve? Will it serve Copake?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that what it used to be is 1mw would roughly represent enough power which is the energy created by capacity to power about 1,000 homes. Nowadays that is not the case because we have more stuff. The 60mw that will be produced from the solar power will power roughly, 15,000 households. The power comes from the solar fields into the substation and electrons flow in the path of least resistance and the power will get distributed in the local grid. There are eleven zones in NY ISO (Independent System Operator.) ISO regulates and governs all of the interconnecting facilities in NYS. Craryville and Copake are in the capital district zone of NY ISO. The power will go into Craryville substation and will be distributed in the local grid.

Supervisor Mettler wants to know if her bill will go down.

Mr. Campbell responds by saying at this time no, not now but through 94C it may.

Lindsay LeBrecht and Dolores Rice, Copake residents wants to know if there are incentives to get this project done earlier and are there consequences if it is not done by a certain date and what is that date.

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that there is not an incentive whether done today or in three years.

Mr. Campbell cannot answer what is the date because he cannot describe private information on a public forum. At this point, there are probably no consequences if it is not done.

Lindsay LeBrecht wanted to comment about the RoeJan Food Panty comment and has a copy of a letter that she is able to share. Ms. LeBrecht continues that the postcard that went out for those who got it and there are a lot of people that do not know about this project at all that said about "Investing in the Community," and that the money that was saved in forms, they gave \$7,000 to the RoeJan Food Pantry, and in fact, the food pantry returned the check to you because "there seems to be some controversy with the solar project your company has proposed for our area. At this time we feel it would be in the

pantry's best interest to not appear in support in this not yet approved project. Postcards sent out to the community naming the pantry as a recipient of the donation might appear to some as an endorsement of this project."

Lindsay LeBrecht then asks who the land owners are involved in this project.

Mr. Campbell spoke with Linda Miller and left a message for Betty Davis from the food pantry and said that there is no political agenda, everybody is going through challenging times and they didn't want to print tens of thousands of pieces of paper and thought that the food pantry would be a very good thing to do considering what people are through during these times. The money will be donated to a different food bank and there was no political motivation.

Mr. Campbell states that regarding the landowners, they have ongoing negotiations and are nearing an agreement but they are private discussions and until there is a site plan he does not feel comfortable naming the landowners without their permission. When studies are finalized and they can present a full plan, you will know who the landowners are.

Lindsay LeBrecht states that the lack of transparency and the lack of communication to everyone is not sitting well and she has concerns for the volunteer fire department and is concerned that if all of those lithium batteries are being stored there, what kind of protection will there be if someone was to do an act of terrorism and at what point do you leave after the project is done.

Mr. Campbell has spoken with Fire Chief Bill Baker and discussed several things that may become an issue down the road and he was very confident that everything was under control.

Supervisor Mettler asks Mr. Campbell if his company, once they build this will they be around for 35 years or sell it to someone else.

Mr. Campbell replies that they won't be here for 35 years. What they typically do is create an operating company and train the operating team with seasoned professionals that can operate the facilities. They are not an asset manager, they are developers. They get the project financed, built, teamed and staffed with proper professionals. The main component of a solar project is getting all of the pieces together and approved by all that needs to approve it.

Supervisor Mettler then interjects and asks Mr. Campbell "will Hecate continue to own this for 5 or 10 years?"

Mr. Campbell replies that he can't say yes or no.

Ruth Ellen and Charles Miller, Copake residents living on or by the site by the corner of 7 and &A, asks Mr. Campbell is there any way that the homeowners who are likely to lose value on their homes from the project of working some arrangement where the homeowner will be reimbursed for the loss of value on the project.

Mr. Campbell replies that he has not read any concrete studies that show adverse effects to property values of solar projects.

Mr. Miller states that in the area, there are a number of sites which sit on one or two acres that are quite visible and are not in any way camouflaged or in some way fit into to the area. Mr. Miller is not sure, despite Mr. Campbell's reassurances, whether this project will be any different in view of the fact that it is such an enormous project.

Mr. and Mrs. Miller did not receive any notice from Hecate.

Darrin Johnson, resident, asks Mr. Campbell that if you share any studies about the impact of solar fields on residential, he thinks it is important to disclose who pays for those studies because, he is guessing that studies that Mr. Campbell have were paid by solar companies and not by communities because solar fields do have a negative impact on residential.

Mr. Johnson also thinks that it is a bit ingenuous that when Lindsay LeBrecht was speaking about the check to the food bank, but yet on the website there are photos of Taconic High School and of the two local fire departments. Mr. Johnson is curious because that is an assumed endorsement and so if Mr. Campbell is showing those photos, Mr. Johnson wants to make sure that those organizations support this project.

Mr. Johnson also thinks it is important at some point that the financial arrangement with the landowners is disclosed because a few people are going to get really rich off of this while the community loses big time and showing that disclosure is going to be important.

Mr. Johnson then asks Mr. Campbell that if he cares so much about the community why are they putting a solar field in a community that has said it does not want large scale solar panels in our community? If Mr. Campbell cares about us and he listening, we have already made a decision, we don't want these in our backyard and if the majority of residents in Copake or Columbia County say this is no good for us, are they going to way?

Mr. Campbell recognizes that Mr. Johnson is upset and responds regarding the first three comments by saying that the town saying that they don't want the project, to date, Mr. Campbell has not received any comments publically.

Mr. Johnson interjects and states that he is sorry to Mr. Campbell, but states that the Town Board has passed zoning regulations that ban large scale commercial solar fields from our community and if the Town Board has done that and Mr. Campbell cares about our community, why are they proposing this?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that they are proposing a solar project that aligns with the climate objectives of the state and they are working with the community to figure out how we can potentially work together. Mr. Campbell continues to say that as Supervisor Mettler stated, there are two ad hoc members of the siting board that will be a part of the application approval process and if anyone has strong opinions, please publically file them with him through email or telephone. Mr. Campbell is unsure if this Zoom meeting will be logged in the Department of Public Services log.

Mr. Johnson then asks that if the majority of Copake residents say no to this are they willing to walk away?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that if the majority come up and say we don't want this project and that is publically filed, a siting board will review that. Mr. Campbell then states that to date, there have been plenty of people that have been supportive.

Mr. Campbell then states that he does not want Mr. Johnson angry at him and that he is trying to give as much information that he can.

Mr. Johnson wants Mr. Campbell to understand that very few people in Copake and in Columbia County know about this project. Mr. Johnson states that Mr. Campbell is not going to hear anybody if he is not listening and they don't let people even know that this is happening and it is being done under the rug.

Mr. Campbell states that he is listening and takes offense to saying that he is not listening.

Mr. Campbell states that he is trying to figure out how to work in a CoVid19 environment and hopes that we can all be appreciative and considerate of those conditions and don't attack him for the changing environment and how he can publically involve people. Mr. Campbell states that he loved all the comments earlier, small meeting groups and having a large public forum and to let us get in front of people. If people are 100% against the project, please file that publically with Mr. Campbell through the website, email, or telephone. The siting board will see all of these comments and they will make the decision with the ad hoc members that Supervisor Mettler and the County Executive will nominate.

At this time, Supervisor Mettler interjects and states that she does not want to cut anybody off but that the onus here was on Hecate to set up an information venue which they did not do. The town will be doing a Zoom meeting where our lawyers will be present on Thursday, July 30, 2020 and will be setting that up and that information out. Also, Supervisor Mettler states that the town hopes to do an in person meeting in the auditorium of the high school that seats almost 900 people on Saturday, October 3, 2020.

Councilperson Gansowski asks Mr. Campbell why can't the postcards or any information be mailed to all of the residents in Copake? Councilperson Gansowski states that it seems like Hecate is trying to hide this and as far as the \$7,000 back from the food pantry, why don't they buy more postcards and get them out to the whole town?

Mr. Campbell responds by smiling and saying yeah.

Councilperson Wolf states that he just wants people to be aware of the fact that yes, Supervisor Mettler is proposing four nominees for potential seats on the siting board. What needs to be understood clearly and maybe getting lost in the way that Mr. Campbell is presenting this is that the siting board thus far has been a rubber stamp for the state's overriding interest in reducing carbon emissions and that is something that we can all understand. Councilperson Wolf continues to say that the reason for that is its composition is five appointees of the governor and two potentially from the community so we cannot rely upon the siting board to do the right thing if the right thing to us is something other than what Hecate is looking to do here. Councilperson Wolf states that to be realistic, we all need to understand that this is the case.

Supervisor Mettler speaks for Noelle Fair and asks Mr. Campbell what is the life of a solar panel?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying that over a twenty five year period the warranty on solar panels will allow for anywhere between 80 and 85% of efficiency after 25 years. There is a .5% degradation annually.

Dolores Rice of Craryville asks Mr. Campbell that he mentioned in passing that there was no noise pollution associated with solar farms but she thought that the inverters created a large air conditioning unit noise or low level hum and is that why you are checking the ambient environment to see what disturbance that hum will actually make and how it will effect wild life not to mention the hum's effect on residents?

Ms. Rice states that while no one can possibly be against clean energy, has lithium mining not in it of itself become an environmental hazard and is it not an extreme pollutant if anything were to happen to the solar farm?

Mr. Campbell responds to the second question by saying that the batteries are an option and not something they are pursuing right now. They are looking through regulatory framework and technology. Mr. Campbell stresses that the only project is the 60mw solar facility and the solar panels are made from silicon which is an earth element.

Ms. Rice asks if Mr. Campbell had mentioned lithium batteries.

Mr. Campbell responds by saying the battery is something that was filed in the "PIP" as an option and is very clear that says it is an option. It is not something they are proceeding with as the actual project. The project is the 60mw solar facility.

Ms. Rice then states that it is going to be fueled by lithium batteries as it stands right now.

Mr. Campbell responds by saying no, they have not committed to any battery technology, size, or anything. Mr. Campbell states that in their public documentation that they are considering batteries as an option but it is a secondary potential down the road and they are not focused on that now because there are way too many other considerations and right now they are focused on the solar project.

Mr. Campbell responds to the noise pollution question by stating that the microphones that people have seen are to understand what the ambient noise is and the inverters that they will use for the panels will be included in a noise study that will be publically shared. Inverters don't create a drum humming noise like some wind power developers hear of.

Ruth Ellen Miller asks Mr. Campbell is how big is a blob?

Mr. Campbell responds by saying roughly 900 acres.

Ruth Ellen Miller then asks for dimensions miles wise.

Councilperson Sullivan comments that the solar panels by the school is three acres.

Ruth Ellen Miller then asks how large is a solar panel?

Mr. Campbell responds that they are 3' x 4.5'.

Ruth Ellen Miller then states that on the subject of the process of inviting people to make comments and to hear what people say, can Mr. Campbell send out some kind of new letter or comments, questions, and answers f to the community on a regular basis. Ms. Miller's desire is to have more information.

Ken Dow, town attorney, states that there are 640 acres are in a square miles and 900 acres would be about 1.4 square miles.

At this time, Supervisor Mettler calls time for this portion of the meeting.

Department Heads/Committee Reports

Roberta Roll reports that the Waterfront Revitalization Plan has been delayed because of CoVid and River Street had a lot of problems during the height of the concern around the virus. The payment request is still not resubmitted but hopes that will be done very soon.

Public Forum

Gray Davis would like to go on record to say that he is opposed to the Hecate development. Mr. Davis states that this project is way over scaled to our rural community and for them to come in and say that they want to work with the community when the Town already has a code that allows something of a certain size and they are doing something that is fifty times the size. This is inconceivable to him.

Lindsey LeBrecht totally agrees with Gray Davis and wants to go on record to say that she is against the project. She will work on getting information on how property values will be affected and will also be working on getting petitions from people from the Town of Copake about this and will be given to Alex Campbell, the Hecate representative.

Roberta Roll states that the idea of having a town wide email or some way of communicating with every single resident in the town came up again after the latest Code Red message from Matt Murell of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors, and that it would be helpful for the town to have everybody's contact information and maybe the Copake Task Force can help with a plan. Roberta requests the Town Board to consider if this is a possibility.

Supervisor Mettler replies that last night people received the communication if they had Code Red.

Supervisor Mettler continues to say that as of last night, The Board of Supervisors has authorized the County to sign up with a statewide program where people can get weather alerts and residents can sign up for what want. Though it is a separate issue from what Roberta Roll is asking Supervisor Mettler appreciates what Roberta Roll is requesting.

Cheryl Berk, Copake resident, states that she thinks the magnitude of this project for a rural community is absurd and the return that we are getting, if our bills are not being lowered and our property values are going to be lower and if we are not getting any benefits from it, it is just really crazy just to even think about it.

Jay Schiff, Copake resident, wanted to ask a quick question regarding the study piece of the presentation and goes on to say that if Mr. Campbell of Hecate has a list of people in the Craryville area to send a postcard, Jay assumes that Mr. Campbell has the same list for other big projects they have done and would like to ask to get that list and then get a group of neighbors together to contact those people for references and also to measure the value difference on their property by using something like Zillow or other ways to measure property values because property values overall have gone up so even if they've gone up but have gone up slower than the rest of the market, that would be a measurement that was hit by this project. Mr. Schiff continues on to say that just like any other project, he would like to get references and the best way to get references is to get people just like us from Hecate's last big project. Mr. Schiff will reach out to Mr. Campbell to get this list. Mr. and Mrs. Schiff are against this project.

Fran and Wayne Miller, Copake residents, Ms. Miller states that she has not heard much about the project. They have gotten information online but it is misinformation. Mrs. Miller appreciates Alex Campbell's presentation but says that we need to know more before we go further or backward on the project. Mrs. Miller is worried about the carbon footprint that we are leaving for our children and our great grandchildren, etc., etc. At present, the Miller's are not for or against the project until they know more.

Ms. Miller also has concerns of meeting in large capacity during this time of CoVid after hearing what Jack Naab and Matt Murell have said.

After a brief discussion of venue, Supervisor Mettler states that it is the Town Board's intention to have a public meeting regarding the solar project one way or another.

Ms. Miller adds that since Alex has said that we are not rushing into this, we have time.

Supervisor Mettler did not agree.

New Business

a. Copake Park Activities/Town Hall-Update

Supervisor Mettler reports that the Copake Town Hall and the Park Building have been closed to the public as of March 19, 2020. On June 11, 2020 the Town Board agreed to open the Town Hall to the public, by appointment only. Nobody is allowed into the Town Hall unless they have an appointment, wear a mask, sign in, and provide contact information.

At this point, no Boards are meeting in person in the Town Hall, but as of last week, Town Committees are allowed to meet in person. No outside groups are allowed to meet in Town Hall at all.

At a Special Meeting on June 23, 2020, the Town Board voted to open the skateboard park and the tennis court. In both cases, the sport is deemed low risk.

As of July 6, 2020 the Town Board voted to open the entire Park. The Park building and the Park bathrooms are still closed to the public.

At this time, Supervisor Mettler would like the Town Board to revisit the decision of opening the playgrounds. On June 11, 2020, at a press conference, the Governor said that it was up to local municipalities whether or not to open their playgrounds. Subsequently, Supervisor Mettler received guidance that said the equipment must be cleaned after every use. The Town of Copake is not equipped to do that.

A Motion was made by Supervisor Mettler and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski that in view of the updated guidance from NYS and the continued threat of CoVid19 that the Town Board close the playground at the Copake Memorial Park until further notice.

Roll Call Vote.

Councilperson Gansowski	yes
Councilperson Wolf	yes
Councilperson Sullivan	abstain
Supervisor Mettler	yes

The vote was carried by 3 votes with 1 abstention. Motion approved.

b. 2020 Music in the Park

Supervisor Mettler states that at the June 11, 2020 Town Board meeting, the Town Board voted unanimously to cancel the 2020 Summer Music Program. The Town Board expressed their disappointment in having to do so and acknowledged all the hard work that has gone into this for many years by Chris Quinby and others, but it was a unanimous vote to cancel the 2020 Summer Music Program.

Supervisor Mettler stated that Councilperson Sullivan had sent her an email for the Town Board to revisit the 2020 Music in the Park Program cancellation.

Councilperson Sullivan states that the Park Commission had met last week and after discussing different issues and ways to do something for the public, the general consensus was that it might be possible with supervision, social distancing, and certain measures in place, that our park would be able to offer other concerts for the second half of the summer.

After a brief discussion amongst the Town Board, Supervisor Mettler states that if there were to be a concert at the end of the summer, it would only be done if conditions allowed it. Supervisor Mettler goes on to say that this could only be done if there was an elaborate plan which is

consistent with the guidelines given by NYS and the Park Commission has never come to the Town Board with any such plan. Councilperson Sullivan will take this information back to the Park Commission to review.

c. Adoption of Purple Heart Resolution and Report on Purple Heart Project-Terry Sullivan

Supervisor Mettler reports that it was the Town Board's hope that at some point we could finally meet in person. There has been a sign that was ordered that says "Purple Heart Community." Supervisor Mettler gave the Town Board a proposed Resolution that the Town Board received about a month ago. If possible, Supervisor Mettler would like to do some sort of ceremony in August outside by the flagpole with Senator Daphne Jordan in attendance and will look into doing so for our Saturday, August 8, 2020 Town Board meeting.

d. Speed Limit on Underhill Road

Supervisor Mettler reports that she has spoken to Bethany Barron who contacted her last month and about concern about the area of Underhill Road where it crosses with the Rail Trail and the number of people on the Rail Trail and would like to have a 30mph speed limit.

After a brief discussion regarding rules and regulations of speed reductions, Supervisor Mettler then asks the Town Board if they want to pursue this matter and vote on a Resolution at the August 8, 2020 Town Board Meeting where the Town Board all agrees.

e. Amended Agreement for Expenditure of Highway Moneys-Section 284 of the Highway Law

Highway Supervisor Gregory addresses the Town Board and states that when the Highway Department prepares their Town Budget in September, they are usually unsure of what the state funding is going to be for the following year, so once the State budget is passed in April of the following year, the Highway Department then knows what all of their funding will be. This year, the State budget included Pave NY and Extreme Winter Recovery Act Funding which increased their State funding by about \$50,000. The new 284 Agreement includes some additional road work from what the Town Board had agreed to do in January.

Supervisor Mettler clarifies that the Highway Department is giving the Town Board the amended agreement for approval.

A Motion was made by Councilperson Wolf and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to amend the Agreement for Expenditure of Highway Moneys-Section 284 of the Highway Law.

Roll Call Vote.

Councilperson Gansowski yes

Councilperson Wolf yes

h. Motion for a Tax Tertiary Settlement Agreement

A Motion was made by Supervisor Mettler and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to approve the following settlement agreement for an Article 7 Tax Tertiary Proceeding at the indicated revised assessment amount and to authorize the Town's attorney to execute a settlement agreement accordingly in the matter of Richard T. Blancato and Marie Blancato, Index #11752-17, parcel #157.-3-39 for the amount of \$460,000.

All in favor. Motion approved.

- i. Barbeque donation in Copake-Peter Reed, Copake Resident, offered the Town a Lazy Man barbeque, model # A3.

Councilperson Sullivan reports that the Park Commission has accepted the barbeque and it has been delivered and they will acknowledge with another letter of thanks from the Park Commission.

Supervisor Mettler was advised by the Town attorney to vote on this as it is Town property.

A Motion was made by Supervisor Mettler and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski that the Town Board accepts the gift of the Lazy Man barbeque from Peter Reed.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Old Business

Motor Vehicle Storage Permit-Performance Auto, 78 Route 7A-Supervisor Mettler states that the Town Board received notice from Building Inspector Lee Heim that this permit is in compliance with the Town as of June 29, 2020 and the matter is now closed.

Copake Memorial Clock-there is no update as of today.

Painting of Copake Memorial Clock-there is no update as of today.

Town Hall Art Committee-they are still working and are close to ready to give a presentation by August.

Resolutions

None

Appointments

A Motion was made by Councilperson Gansowski and seconded by Councilperson Wolf to appoint Stacey Hartka as the new Zoning Board Administrative Assistant.

Supervisor Mettler has disclosed that she does business with Stacey Hartka and will abstain from the vote.

Councilperson Gansowski would like Stacey Hartka to come in as soon as possible to work with and monitor Veronica Fabio, as she will be leaving soon.

The vote was carried by 3 votes with 1 abstention. Motion approved.

Stacey Hartka has been appointed the new Zoning Board Administrative Assistant.

Budget

Supervisor Mettler states there is nothing new except within the next month she will be putting out requests to all of the departments for their budget requests.

Councilpersons' Reports

Councilperson Gansowski reports that the ZBA had passed the snow park at Catamount last month.

Councilperson Gansowski reports that the cell tower has withdrawn its application from the ZBA.

Councilperson Sullivan reports that the Planning Board is meeting and wanted to also mention the withdrawal of the cell tower application.

Councilperson Wolf reports that he attended the inaugural meeting of the Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee Chaired by Tom Goldsworthy who ran a really good meeting. Everybody was introduced and was asked to think about a number of broad topics ad they will get together and start working in earnest every two weeks.

Councilperson Wolf also states that he has spoken to two environmental engineering firms preliminarily from whom we will be receiving information, fee schedules, and proposals for the Town Board to conduct interviews.

A Motion was made by Councilperson Wolf and seconded by Councilperson Gansowski to hold a Special Town Board meeting via Zoom, in order to discuss the Hecate Project for Thursday, July 30, 2020 at 7:00pm.

All in favor. Motion approved.

Public Forum

Councilperson Gansowski stated that his last question to Alex Campbell was not answered. He would like to know if they could send something to everyone in town, not just the people within the site of the project and he would like this on record that his question was unanswered.

Supervisor Mettler asks for a moment of silence to remember those in Columbia County who have died of CoVid19.

Grant Langdon wanted to speak but could not unmute himself after several attempts to help from Supervisor Mettler.

Next Meeting Date

Saturday, August 8, 2020, 9:00am

Executive Session

No

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilperson Gansowski and seconded by Councilperson Sullivan that the Town Board meeting be adjourned.

All in favor. Motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,