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Wright H. Ellis, Town Supervisor

November 28, 2022

Re: Bear Ridge Solar LLC, Project

Dear fellow Citizens of Cambria,

The Bear Ridge Solar LLC, Project, **all 937 acres of it**, has been an issue for over five years as it has made its way through the administrative/regulatory processes of two quite different NYS renewable energy programs. A Draft Permit, based on the Developers Application and additional supplements, **without any input from our communities**, has been issued by the New York State Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES). The towns of Cambria and Pendleton, along with Niagara County and Citizens Opposed to Industrial Solar (COIS) are in the midst of a 60 day window, during which they may file issue statements challenging matters addressed in the Application and the Draft Permit.

The most troubling aspect of this Draft Permit issued for an industrial size renewable energy facility of this size, is the determination by ORES, that **they are ignoring substantive portions of our local laws** and, approving without exception, whatever the developer requests. There is no other land use category in New York State where a developer, in this case working with three landowners, has the sole authority to decide where to place a project without any concern for local laws and local zoning, with no need for a Building Permit, nor site plan review by the Planning Board, and/or Zoning Board approval of a Variance or Special Permit.

The Chief Administrative Law Judge overseeing the application process has scheduled Public Comment Hearings on the project. These Public Comment Hearings are the best and only opportunity for private citizens to directly address the official(s) with the authority to issue decisions on the Permit. The first hearing will be conducted on **Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 5:00 PM** at the **Cambria Volunteer Fire Company Hall**, 4631 Cambria Wilson Road, (NYS Route 425.) The second will be conducted on **Wednesday, December 14, at 6:00 PM**, also at the Cambria Fire Hall. Oral comments are preferred at the hearing and may be limited to three minutes. **Longer written comments concerning the Application and the Draft Permit conditions must be filed with ORES by 5:00 PM on Friday, December 23, 2022.** Further details are contained in the Combined Notice of Availability of Draft Permit Conditions, Public Comment Period and Public Comment Hearing, which is posted on the Town of Cambria website. We realize that the timing of these hearings in the middle of December, when attention is focused on the pending holidays, with Christmas shopping and parties in full swing, is very inconvenient. However, it is imperative for the future direction of our Town and our Town sense of community, that we have a strong turnout at both of these hearings. Even if you are uncomfortable speaking in front of an audience, please attend in support of your neighbors!

Previously on February 4th, we mailed a letter to all residents, discussing specific negative impacts of the Bear Ridge Solar Project on our community. If you missed it, additional copies are available at the Town Hall as well as on our Town website. The Town Board continues to be united in its opposition to the project, as well as the members of COIS. We are working diligently with our legal counsel and other professional consultants on concerns relative to the case and are preparing a strong statement on the issues.

There is nothing good about this project for the Town of Cambria and its citizens!

Sincerely,

Wright H. Ellis