



Planning Board  
Town of Farmington  
1000 County Road 8  
Farmington, NY 14425-9565

July 2, 2019

Dear Planning Board Members,

We were copied on an email sent to the attention of the Town Planning Board on May 16, 2019 by local neighbors, regarding visual impacts of the proposed Yellow Mills Community Solar projects. [That email is located on the Town's website, and listed as Abstract #102.](#) In the spirit of answering questions and comments from neighbors, and in light of the Planning Board's review of the aforementioned projects, we have drafted this response for both the Board and public to review. We feel this will clarify important facts about the visual impacts of solar energy systems, and the Yellow Mills developments specifically.

Please also find attached with this letter updated visual renderings, which depict the June 2019 revision to the Landscape Plan. This update was based on comments received by DRS from the Planning Board and general public. We are including these renderings to support the visual study for SEQR, and to allow the Board a chance to see the increased visual buffering which the amended Landscape Plan provides.

DRS appreciates the correspondence received on May 16, 2019 regarding pictures that were found on our Facebook page, and concerns over visual impacts. To clarify, the images on our Facebook page were posted to show construction progress of our Hospital Road Solar energy system in the Town of Calicoon, in Sullivan County. That solar farm received widespread support, and is now fully operational and fully subscribed to by around 600 local residents who receive power from the solar farm. During construction, some of our subscribers asked for updates on our construction progress. Facebook is a good way to do that. [Our other projects can be seen here on our website](#), and our progress can be followed on Facebook too.

The pictures referenced in the May 16 letter show an Inverter and Transformer station, and were taken about 8 and 20 feet away from these components while they were being

assembled. In comparison, the Yellow Mills Solar inverters and transformers will be located far inside the solar energy system, and over 600 feet away from any public road – the closest vantage point the public will have of them. A completed system also looks much different when viewed from any distance, than a system under construction. To compare the construction images referenced in the May 16 letter, to what an actual completed system looks like, please refer to the images we provided to the Planning Board in November 2018, which are listed as Abstract #038B, [located here, on the Town's website](#). For Yellow Mills Solar, this specific equipment will be blocked from view by the solar panels and extensive landscape screening.

We take our neighbors concerns over visual impacts seriously, and we do our best to minimize and reduce these impacts. Here are some things we are doing to address visual concerns:

- **Increased Landscape Screening** – Based on input that we received at the Planning Board hearing on May 15, 2019, we updated the Preliminary Landscape Plan to include more evergreen trees, and no deciduous shrubs. Trees will be planted taller than originally proposed, and closer together, with additional screening added around the system, and on the northwest and southeast corners of the property. This landscape plan may require more input from the Planning Board before it is final.
- **Increased setbacks** – The inverter and transformer for Yellow Mills Solar will be placed approximately 600' from any public road, well inside the system, and out of view behind landscaped screening, and well beyond the Town's minimum required setbacks.
- **Contextual fencing** – The fence used to surround the systems will be a typical farm post fence, and was chosen to blend in with similar farm fences in the area, and the existing fence on the active cattle farm. The fence will be made of wood posts, with a rectangular metal fabric used as the fence material. There will be no barbed wire or chain link fencing used anywhere onsite. The sample pictures provided in Abstract #038B show an example of the fence we will use.



In regards to the additional statement from the May 16 letter that there is no benefit to the Town or residents from solar energy, we try very hard to help people learn about the benefits of solar, as there are many. Here are some of the benefits of Yellow Mills Solar:

1. **Homegrown Energy** - Yellow Mills Solar can power around 1,044 local homes and small businesses. Energy created by the Yellow Mills Solar can only be sold locally. Under New York State law, we cannot sell energy outside of the Rochester Gas and Electric utility market, out of state, downstate, or across state.
2. **Energy Choice** - Solar farms provide an opportunity to people and businesses who cannot, or do not want to put solar on their property, to access renewable solar energy. Today, there are few options like this for people to choose from, unless they have a local solar farm nearby.
3. **Supporting the Community** - Tax dollars from the solar farm will be paid to the Town, County, and School District, while placing no demand on the services those taxes pay for. For example, Yellow Mills Solar will pay school taxes, but it will not send children to school.
4. **Jobs** - Yellow Mills Solar already creates and sustains local jobs, and generates local spending within the Town. It will continue to do so over its lifetime.
5. **Carbon Offsets** – Over its lifetime, Yellow Mills Solar will offset approximately 17,500,000 pounds of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This is the equivalent of taking nearly 20 million cars off the road, reducing the amount of coal burned in the US by 8.8 million pounds, or preventing 950,000 gallons of gasoline from being consumed.
6. **Doing our Part** - When Yellow Mills is built, the Town of Farmington will join thousands of communities across the United States, who are making positive efforts to choose renewable energy over environmentally damaging fossil fuel energy sources, like coal, oil and natural gas. This will help preserve our planet for future generations.
7. **Public Health** - Solar energy is dramatically cleaner than fossil fuels, and reduces their consumption to create better air and water quality and public health. It takes 8 minutes for rays of sunlight to reach Earth, and Yellow Mills Solar will instantly convert that energy



into clean electricity. In comparison, it takes millions of years for the Earth to create coal, oil and natural gas, and an unknown number of years for the damaging effects of mining, refining and burning fossil fuels to be remediated from our environment. By reducing our dependency on fossil fuels, we can make the environment cleaner and healthier for the planet and people.

8. **Sustainability** - By allowing solar to be built, Farmington will support the important New York State mandate of reaching to 70% renewable energy by 2030, and being 100% carbon neutral energy by 2050.

We hope this information was helpful, and we welcome any other questions or comments you may have.

Sincerely,

Best,

Daniel Compitello  
*Project Developer*



130 North Winton Road  
Rochester, NY 14610

[www.delawareriversolar.com](http://www.delawareriversolar.com)