

Date: March 9, 2016

To: State Legislators

From: Robin Clarke
24 Howe Road
Glastonbury, CT

Re: Recommended Connecticut Siting Council Changes

I have been a resident of Glastonbury for more than 20 years. Our family chose our neighborhood for its picturesque, unspoiled charm. I, and my neighbors, have been negatively impacted by the Siting Council's approval of a fuel cell in our residential neighborhood. It a massive, industrial structure (80 FT long X 30FT high) that sits a concrete pad surrounded by "keep out " fencing topped with barbed wire.

Apparently approved in 2009, construction began in early 2015, a six year delay. There was no public comment period prior to original approval; no public comment period once it was determined it was not being constructed in the location specified in the original proposal and no comment period six years later when work began in early 2015. Residents just saw digging in the middle of winter and sought answers as to what was happening. It was not until April when residents learned what was being constructed. I am not opposed to clean energy. I am

opposed to locating it in a community where quality of life and the appeal of our neighborhood have been severely compromised.

The location of this fuel cell is a terrible mistake. The residents were not aware of what was being constructed until several months after work began and had no input. The landscaping plan, while well intentioned, cannot begin to hide this large, commercial structure. The trees do not even reach the concrete pad on which the fuel cell sits and therefore look like arrows highlighting a very unattractive eyesore. I confront it every day as I take a walk. It is what all visitors to my house comment on – “ What is that monstrosity down the road?” It belongs in an industrial park not a residential neighborhood. It is also the reason people now want to move and can't sell their homes or if they can sell, the value is markedly reduced because of location near the fuel cell.

I am writing to ask that Connecticut Siting Council responsibilities be amended so that something like this never happens in another community.

I strongly advocate for the following changes to the Siting Council

1. In order for a project to be approved, detailed specifications as to size, location and community impact must be submitted. When project size and scope have the potential to negatively impact a community, the community needs to be informed of the proposed project and the Siting Council would allow for a

comment period for the community weigh in prior to a decision by the Siting Council.

2. Once the Siting Council approves a proposal, it must be completed within 3 years or it needs to go through a re-approval process including a community comment period prior to re-approval.
3. Any changes to the originally approved proposal specifications and scope would require a revised proposal and a comment period prior to re-approval
4. The Siting Council would ensure that residents receive information during the construction process regarding progress and potential negative impacts such as noise, disruption of traffic flow, foul odors, etc. Information should also be made available as to completion date.

The fuel cell project in Glastonbury is a case study of what happens with no communication. Residents have no idea when the project will be completed and fully operational. Originally scheduled for completion in July 2015, construction has lasted more than 14 months. Yesterday there were 13 trucks and vans lining both sides of Chalker Hill Road. This is a daily occurrence 6 days a week. Lack of information leads results in unnecessary stress and frustration for residents.

5. Post construction accountability needs to be clearly communicated for any problems that could arise and the process for escalating problems needs to be defined. For example, in terms of the fuel cell, it is still not clear who owns noise monitoring and noise mitigation. It is not clear how to address any post-go live concerns.

Please take the Siting Council Mission seriously so that this doesn't happen again. The mission of the Siting Council is to **“balance” the need for growth and clean affordable energy with the need to preserve the quality of life in communities where projects seek to be located**”. Nothing could be farther from the truth based on the way this project has played out in Glastonbury. I urge legislators to put safeguards in place to ensure that the quality of life in communities is protected and community input is sought and valued.

Sincerely,

Robin Clarke