

OFFICIAL COPY

Ken Wilbanks
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FILED

FEB 26 2020

Clerk's Office
N.C. Utilities Commission

RE: Duke Energy's solar panel farm in Hot Springs NC
Docket NO. E-2, SUB 1185

Concerning the North Carolina Utilities Commission:

Duke Energy is planning to construct and operate **a solar panel farm within the town limits of Hot Springs**. Due to low newspaper subscription rates and limited access to the internet, our community was not aware of this project and both our public and evidentiary hearings were cancelled.

In our recent town meeting on 2/3/20 our Aldermen said they were not aware of the project and have no answers for our concerns. It appears due process may not have been followed in the granting of the permits and the project was not brought before our Planning & Zoning Board, nor did the Board of Adjustments have an opportunity to review the plan.

In addition to such apparent negligence, our community has grave concerns about the location of this project, our public safety, the impact of this project, and how it will be managed.

We request that the Utilities Commission delay any further development and construction on this project until we are granted both a public hearing and an evidentiary hearing.

Of 17 consumer endorsements, **only one came from Madison County** (the rest from Asheville or the State of NC) which was from our former Mayor and is misleading about the benefits for our community. It appears the solar energy will primarily go to Asheville and we will receive only four hours of "emergency service" in a blackout situation.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture did NOT endorse the project and the AT Conservancy and the North Carolina Forest Service (both directly impacted

by the project) were not even aware of the proposed solar panel farm or its location.

We have launched a public community campaign regarding our rights for a public hearing and for the community to made fully aware of the risks, dangers, and actual benefits. This includes a public Facebook page, a press release in both local papers, community petitions, and submitting formal complaints to the Utilities Commission directly.

I write this letter to give context and background as to why you will be receiving the formal complaints from citizens in Hot Springs. It is our sincere hope and request that our concerns be considered in the upcoming Utilities Commissions' review of Duke Energy's reporting and planning regarding UC Docket E-2 Sub 1185.

In eager expectation that you will be part of the solution going forward.

Life Favors the Bold,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Wilbanks', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ken Wilbanks

Chief Clerk

North Carolina Utilities Commission

4325 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-4300

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Regarding: Docket E-2 Sub 1185

- Duke Energy Progress
- Contact: Jason Walls: Local Government
- Business Address: 555 Brevard Road, Asheville, NC 28806
- Category: Electric Utilities, Utilities
- Description:

Serves customers in Madison, Haywood, Buncombe, Yancey, Mitchell and
Avery counties.

- Phone: 1-800-452-2777

I. Complaint:

Duke Energy is planning to construct and operate a solar panel farm within the town limits of Hot Springs. Due to low newspaper subscription rates and limited access to the internet, our community was not aware of this project and both our public and evidentiary hearings were cancelled. This project was not brought before our town Board of Adjustments to review and request terms of safety, compliance, reporting, and management. I also have grave concerns about the location of this project, our public safety, the impact of this project, and how it will be managed.

II. Request:

I request that the Utilities Commission delay any further development and construction on this project so that it can be brought back to the Town of Hot Springs for the Board of Adjustments to review. I also request that the Utilities Commission require Duke Energy to notify the town of Hot Springs and convene both a public hearing and an evidentiary hearing.

Thank you for your consideration and response to this complaint.

Sincerely,

Signature (sign in ink)

Date

Notary

Date

JEANNE CALDWELL GENTRY
NOTARY PUBLIC, NORTH CAROLINA
MADISON COUNTY
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
DECEMBER 13, 2020