

Solar Update

There has been no change in the status of our efforts to be granted “party status,” which would enable us to present evidence and testimony before an administrative law judge (ALJ) concerning important, unresolved issues.

The ALJ has before her Copake’s papers and those from Sensible Solar for Rural New York (“SSNY”), Birch Hill Road Neighbors Association, and Craryville Farms, LLC, who also seek party status. In those papers, we have raised serious issues regarding flood protection and preservation of wetlands, two major points of contention. We are arguing that Copake must be granted party status to adjudicate them. However, ORES never has granted party status to a town targeted for a utility-scale solar factory. On the merits, we deserve to be the first.

There has been a recent change at ORES. The executive director, who attended two of the public comment hearings at Town Hall in January, has resigned. An interim director has been appointed. We do not know what the impact of this personnel change will be. The executive director is the decision-maker who will determine whether to grant Hecate a final permit for Shepherd’s Run. A decision on party status could come any day now.

Richard Wolf
Supervisor