



Mayor Robert J. Greenbaum

Mount Olive Township

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VIA EMAIL

New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
c/o Board Secretary Aida Camacho
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
Post Office Bo 350
Trenton, NJ 0825-0350
board.secretary@bpu.nj.gov

**Re: Comments regarding Docket No. QO20020184, Solar Successor Program
Mount Olive Solar Farm**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the Mayor of Mount Olive Township, Morris County, NJ. I am writing on behalf of the Township of Mount Olive and the Mount Olive Township Council. I am writing in support of the position relative to the NJBPU's Solar Successor Program being advanced by CEP Renewables, LLC.

As you may know, the Township of Mount Olive is the site of the Combe Fill North Landfill, a former USEPA "Superfund" site. For many years, the Township struggled with the property, as it caused environmental contamination in the surrounding vicinity and became a tax drain on the Township. In 1990, the Township purchased the tax sale certificates applicable to the landfill site. As of December 1, 2019, the amount of past due taxes totaled nearly \$2.3 million.

However, after many years of starts and stops, we are now poised to turn the landfill into one of the great redevelopment success stories in New Jersey. In 2019, the Township enacted a Redevelopment Plan pursuant to the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq. ("LRHL") "with the intent of developing the site as a Solar Photovoltaic Energy Facility." In 2020, the Township designated Mount Olive Solar Farm, LLC ("*MOSF*") as the "redeveloper" of the site, also in accordance with the LRHL. The Township and MOSF entered into a purchase and sale and redevelopment agreement whereby MOSF, through a related entity known as Gold Mine Road Solar, LLC ("*GMRS*") would purchase the municipally-owned tax sale certificates from the Township, foreclose on the landfill property, and undertake the redevelopment of the property with an approximately 26.5 MW dc utility-scale solar array.

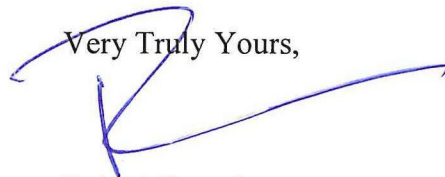
This redevelopment project became possible, at exactly this time, because of the state's current Transition Solar Incentive Program, or TREC. By utilizing the certainty and stability of the TREC, the designated redeveloper of the property is able to finance the entitlement process – which I understand to be a particularly costly endeavor – and to refund the Township for all past due taxes attributable to the property. Once the redevelopment is complete, the property will become the site of a green-energy producing and revenue generating facility for the Township. After having carried the tax burden of this property for over 30 years, the Township is certainly happy to see the property redeveloped and return to the tax rolls as a substantial ratable.

We owe the success of this redevelopment effort to a strong partnership with the designated redeveloper, MOSF, an affiliate of CEP Renewables, LLC. CEP would not have been able to undertake this substantial project without having the benefit of a stable, certain, and, most importantly, financeable solar tariff. We know the challenges associated with the Combe North landfill first hand and we also know that no developer would have approached this project with tenacity of CEP had a stable and certain solar tariff not been available.

We point this out for the Board's benefit because we understand that the Board is considering doing away with the TREC program in favor of a competitive bid solar tariff program. We urge the Board to consider our success story when evaluating the comments to the Staff's proposal. Our understanding is that CEP is engaged in other projects like ours across the state and we would very much like to see other municipalities take advantage of the Mount Olive model to the extent the Board is willing to support it.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Greenbaum
Mayor