

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, CT 06786
www.plymouthct.us

Planning and Zoning Commission
Tel: (860)585-4043
Fax: (860)585-4015

Minutes

November 25, 2025

Call to Order: Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle called the November 25, 2025, Planning and Zoning Commission Regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Gary Gallagher, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski, Planning and Zoning Alternate Member Connie Kapralos, and Planning and Zoning Member Jim Klaneski. Also in attendance were Town Councilwoman Susan Boilard, Director of Planning and Economic Development Margus Laan, Town Council Liaison Ron Tiscia and Town Councilman T.J. Zagruski.

Fire Exit Notification

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle noted the Fire Exits for the Planning and Zoning Commissioners and the Public Audience.

Pledge of Allegiance

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle led the Planning and Zoning Commissioners and the Public Audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Regular Meeting: Commission and Staff Discussion

Discussion Item: Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One, LLC d/b/a Verogy for Large Scale Ground Mounted Solar Electric System at 270 Preston Road/Assessor Parcel Number 021-012-013E-1; Petition Number 1696 before the Connecticut Siting Council

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle stated that per the CT Siting Council, the Town of Plymouth has to investigate going forward with the Solar System proposed for Preston Road, noting the Town Staff will fight to deny the Application. He further stated the residents have the right to not have it in their neighborhood and the Town will be dealing with what the State has sent.

Margus Laan read the following letter received from Melanie Bachman, Executive Director of the CT Siting Council: *Dear Mayor Kilduff: Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 4-176 and 16-50k, the Connecticut Siting Council is in receipt of a notice of election to waive exclusion from Council jurisdiction and a petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 4-176 and 16-50k, to construct, maintain and operate a 0.975 megawatt solar photovoltaic electric generating facility in the Town of Plymouth.*

**Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Two of Eight Pages**

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

In accordance with Section 10-50j-40 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, on or about November 14, 2025, written notice of the intent to file the petition for a declaratory ruling was provided to the Council, the property owner of record, abutting property owners and the chief elected official of the municipality in which the proposed solar facility will be located. You may access the petition and other documents for this proceeding on our website at <https://portal.ct.gov/csc> under the "pending Matters" link. Should you have any questions or comments regarding the above referenced petition for a declaratory ruling, please feel free to call me at 860-827-2951 or submit written comments to the Council by December 14, 2025. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Melanie A. Bachman, Executive Director.

Margus Laan stated copies of the information for the Solar Field proposal, including the aforementioned letter, are available on the back table for the public.

Public Comment

John McNamara, 62 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated that from what he had read this declaratory reading can be issued by the Council if it is deemed that this project does not pose a substantial adverse effect, noting his argument is that it will. He further stated that he is an Executive with the National Shooting Sports Foundation and he works closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Departments. John McNamara stated that he also works closely with State Bear Biologists and has spent a lot of time learning and visiting black bears in his neighborhood. He further stated his neighborhood, and the property behind it, is owned by the Bristol Water Department, and is full of black bears, noting the population continues to grow. John McNamara stated the Governor has said he will sign a Bear Hunt Bill if it crosses his desk. He further stated the sentence on page three of the Solar Application states that the Solar Field poses no environmental risk, noting this is incorrect and briefly elaborated on the lifestyle and habits of black bears. John McNamara stated the Water Department's property has been there for 100 years and if the current eight acres are taken away from them for a Solar Field the bears will begin looking for food in the neighborhood yards, garages, houses, gardens and will begin harassing people and pets. He further stated the bears will be losing a substantial food source if the stagnant orchard is removed. John MacNamara stated he feels the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) may be interested in this issue, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. John MacNamara stated he was willing to reach out, along with his partners, to these agencies and ask them to become involved on behalf of the neighborhood and the community and briefly elaborated.

Chris Simo-Kinzer, 52 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated he was in agreement with John McNamara's comments regarding the black bears in the surrounding neighborhood. Chris Simo-Kinzer stated the last time he had spoken at a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting regarding this same issue his concern was, and still is, the environmental impact effect this Solar System will have on the Pequabuck River downhill from the proposed solar farm.

Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Three of Eight Pages

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

Chris Simo-Kinzer stated he cannot believe that the Town Inland-Wetlands Commission doesn't have a problem with the proposal, if in fact they are even aware of it. Chris Simo-Kinzer stated there are many abutting properties and if there is a fire on the panels there is a large concern he may lose his house, noting that he has a ton of woodland and underbrush and it will go up like the wild fires in California. He further stated he cannot understand how this issue isn't considered to be an environmental concern.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated the Fire Chief had said he would not let his crew in to fight a solar fire even if they could get a truck up to the solar field.

Rob Berman, 42 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated he has the same concern as he did at the previous Planning and Zoning meetings, which is the fire concern. Rob Berman stated earlier this year there was a solar field in East Windsor that caught on fire from a spark generated from the panels and 40 trees were engulfed within five minutes. He further stated the Town Fire Chief has stated he won't risk people or equipment to put out a solar fire at this property. Rob Berman stated East Windsor had a solar field fire and they had to call Warehouse Point who brought in a forestry truck, noting he doubts that Plymouth has one. Rob Berman stated he noticed a couple of inconsistencies, citing page 13 of the solar farm application where they mentioned early on the Fire Marshal was okay with this project, but we have the Fire Chief saying absolutely not, noting we should get clarification on this and get one common statement from our Fire Officials. Rob Berman stated that in all previous discussions with Verogy noise had been discussed and they had said only the burners might make noise however there is a 1,000 kilowatt transformer involved in this project noting that he personally has installed a 69 kw so he knows for a fact that a 1,000 kw will be non-stop humming.

Lisa Simo-Kinzer, 42 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated that she would like to know what the best steps are which the residents can take to fight this issue at the State level; questioning if it should be petitions, phone calls, sending letters, etc. She further stated with a two-week deadline we need to take the most efficient steps possible.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle stated that he had spoken to the Mayor who will be involving the Town Attorney Bill Hamzy on this issue. He further stated that he wanted to thank the Town Council members who were present this evening for attending.

Margus Laan stated that he would recommend all concerned individuals write on behalf of themselves and their families to the CT Siting Council and to state where their property is located in relation to the proposed solar farm, and the specific impact(s) such as flooding, nearby brush, etc., a solar farm would have on your property. Margus Laan noted the address for the CT Siting Council is shown in the packet on the second sheet as follows: Marilyn Bachman, Executive Director, State of CT Siting Council, 10 Franklin Avenue, New Britain, CT 06051.

**Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Four of Eight Pages**

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

Margus Laan Margus stated the website and the petition are also listed in the packet of documents. Margus Laan stated there should also be one letter that all the neighbors sign collectively, as well as the individual letters. Margus Laan stated he will include a copy of the letters in the Town correspondence to the CT Siting Council, as well.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated this is about “the more noise you make.”

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Connie Kapralos stated if anyone has pictures of flooding on their properties, they should include them in their correspondence to the CT Siting Council, noting it is good backup to reinforce your statement(s).

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski stated residents who spoke this evening regarding their professional experience with the bears, the loss of habitat from the installation of transformers will have, direct knowledge of the potential for problems etc., should be included in the individual letters.

Mealnie Church, 328 Main Street, Terryville, stated when she challenged the Town on the school referendum at that time it was unlimited when you could put in your lawsuit and briefly elaborated. Melanie Church recommended contacting Attorney Pearly Grimes, Litchfield, as a group, noting he had assisted her and was very knowledgeable. Melanie Church stated residents should also take as many pictures as possible and discuss the problems people are currently having with Town solar projects near their homes.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski recommended having every member of a household write to the CT Siting Council, not just one person, noting this makes more noise.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner George Castle stated the proposal places the solar farm on a hill and runoff is on all the sides, noting if the land is stripped of trees the water will not be evenly displaced. He further stated the water will flow through the troughs the solar panels will be creating, and he doesn't feel the storm system is adequate enough to handle the major water issues.

Rob Berman stated on page 18 of the petition they refer to the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development Regulations and pages 30/31 reads south facing slopes are ideal, noting it should be removed. Rob Berman stated the when the water runoff was brought up previously Verogy talked about adding a retention basin that would empty in the Town's sewer system, noting that would only make things worse; a brief discussion followed.

Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Five of Eight Pages

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

When questioned by Gary DeFilippo, Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle noted State Representative Henri Martin has been contacted.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski stated he had telephoned the CT Siting Council and noted they are easy to reach and will answer any questions anyone might have. Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski stated another concern that the Commission had regarding the maintenance of the property, including moving and planting trees, cutting brush and replacing dead trees as soon as possible. Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski questioned if this project gets flipped, what happens when the panels need replacing or break, and what about the heavy metals leaking from the panels (lead and silver) if a fire occurs. He further stated the hill would need to be stripped and questioned where the runoff would then go. Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski stated the Commission needs to review past meeting discussions/minutes and put them in a cohesive packet collectively.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated the potential flooding is bad but it's the potential fire(s) that scares him and feels the Commission should concentrate on that issue.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Connie Kapralos stated another concern would be the runoff from the solar panels into the neighborhood wells, noting there is no Town water in this area. She further stated this concern should be mentioned in everyone's correspondence to the CT Siting Council, noting everyone needs to protect their livelihood and property.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner George Castle stated the runoff goes straight into the aquifer.

Steven Burns, 51 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated he cannot imagine what would happen if the proposed solar field were to catch on fire. He further stated the whole project is bizarre, noting if the land is stripped of trees the water will be a problem. Steven Burns stated if the orchard is removed the bears will be everywhere looking for food, noting they do have patterns and memories and this is a concern to him.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski stated the Commission is not against solar, however this property is just not the spot for it.

Melanie Church stated the High School had problems with the solar field and they ended up giving it to the Town so no taxes are paid on it, and the same thing will happen with this proposed project. Melanie Church stated the residents are having their quality of life taken away.

Angela White, 63 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated the proposed solar farm will not benefit the Town of Plymouth, it will lower the property value of the neighborhood, noting it will only benefit the owner of the land and the solar company.

Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Six of Eight Pages

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

Angela White stated she doesn't understand how the State can override the Town, noting the benefit factor should also be noted in the correspondence to the CT Siting Council.

When questioned by Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle, Town Council Liaison Ron Tiscia stated he felt contacting State Senators and State Representatives was a good idea.

Rob Berman stated that as long as they are petitioning, the Town should ask the State Department of Agriculture to look at the land involved, noting they would be involved because of the proposed wattage.

Gary DeFilippo, 278 Preston Road, Terryville, questioned if the Town had a copy of the Engineering Report that Verogy submitted to the CT Siting Council and if so, was anything changed. He further stated that he felt a lot was changed from what they previously showed the Town.

Margus Laan noted all the documentation were on the State's website, noting he hadn't received anything new from Verogy. He further stated he had contacted Steven Trinkaus, P.E., Southbury, CT, who had previously assisted the Town in response to Verogy's solar farm proposal.

Gary DeFilippo stated there is an underground aquifer under the property that is five times larger than the old marsh.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle stated there are 22 aquifers in Town, noting he had been involved with the Fall Mountain Water Project.

Gary DeFilippo stated that when the subdivision was done it was noted by Connecticut Water that they could not get water in and everyone has wells in the area because there is not enough water pressure, noting the Town should include this fact in their correspondence to the CT Siting Council. He further stated this issue also affects the Fountainhead Road and other neighboring roads in the area.

Margus Laan stated he will be working and going through the documents and will also be speaking with Steven Trinkaus and briefly elaborated. Margus Laan stated he will respond before December 14th and requested copies of residential comments also be given to him to send to the CT Siting Council. He further stated he would like all submissions to include contact information in case he has any questions.

Gary DeFilippo stated the Bristol Water Department should also be contacted noting they own all the property after 232 Preston Road/former Bilodeau property.

**Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Seven of Eight Pages**

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

When questioned by Melanie Church, Margus Laan stated he will invite the Town Attorney to the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

Tammy DeFilippo, 278 Preston Road, Terryville, questioned if the Town moratorium on solar fields has any bearing on the Siting Council and would it hold them back. She further stated that she found it suspicious that Verogy went to the Siting Council, questioning if they have a contact or a connection that would push it through for them. Tammy DeFilippo stated the stress is unbelievable, noting is killing all of the neighborhood and they appreciate everything the Commission and the Town is doing for them.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated the entire neighborhood should put their stress down on paper and let their State Representatives know.

Margus Laan stated the Town moratorium on solar would only be for projects within the Town to regulate, noting the CT Siting Council is above the Town. Margus Laan noted the State will not be as demanding as the Town.

Stephen Burns, 51 Old Farm Road, Terryville, questioned how the deadline can be in two weeks when there is a revised Engineering Plan which the Town doesn't have details for.

Margus Laan outlined the meeting history of the project, noting the Town only has what was presented at past meetings; and briefly elaborated.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated the deadline date is out of the Town's hands. He further stated that page two has nothing to do with the Town; noting it is the State of Connecticut's deadline.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle stated we should request the Engineering Report and have the changes noted in the report.

Kurt Weisheit, 57 Old Farm Road, Terryville, stated there were comments from the Fire Department regarding fighting solar panel fires and requested clarification about the contamination involved if they were to use foam to extinguish a potential fire.

Citing a town by the airport in CT, Kurt Weisheit stated their Fire Department used foam which went into the Farmington River and there was significant contamination that needed to be mitigated. He further stated the neighboring properties of the solar field in question tonight all have wells and the foam is toxic, and it would be an environmental disaster that would affect the entire Town by going into the public waterway.

Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
November 25, 2025
Page Eight of Eight Pages

Discussion Item Revival of the proposal of Terryville Solar One Cont'd.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski stated electricity and water do not mix; noting chemical fires are put out with foam and this is another concern for the Commission to follow up on with the Fire Department.

Margus Laan stated that he will be going through all the documents and will try to get something together by the end of next week for the following week.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman George Castle stated the Planning and Zoning Commission would be meeting the first week in December just for this purpose.

Margus Laan stated he will get clarification as to what the Fire Department said and request they revisit the fire-fighting question

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jim Klaneski made a motion, seconded by Planning and Zoning Commissioner Michael Gutowski, to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia A. Hale
Recording Secretary