

NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

July 7, 2020

Mr. Tom Kravitz

Town Planner

North Smithfield Town Hall

PO Box 248

Slatersville, RI 02876

RE: Gold Property Solar

AP 10 Lot 218 and AP 14 Lots 7, 8, 17, 102, 105, 110 & 254

Dear Mr. Kravitz:

On behalf of the North Smithfield Heritage Association (NSHA), we would like to recommend that the Planning Board grant the Special Use Permit and Dimensional Variance requested by the Applicant.

This proposed project would result in the Town immediately owning and having full control of 56 acres, and eventually all of the 124 acre parcel without having to spend Town taxpayer funds. On these 56 acres, the Town will obtain two historic cemeteries, the remains of the 19th century Field's Rail Station and Augustus Fields piggery, as well as two archeological sites with 3,000 to 5,000 year old Native American settlement activity.

Access to Tarklin Pond would give the Town its first publicly accessible swimming area and would increase available fishing areas. The trail system that currently exists, as well as one that would be built to connect existing sections around the solar fields, would be the one of the largest in Town, providing much needed public hiking within North Smithfield.

Our recommendation is conditioned on the owner of the property adding the following parcels to the 56 acres of conservation land to the Town as he has repeatedly stated that he would on social media:

Plat 14 Lot 254	Lake Bel-Air	8.5 acres
Plat 14 Lot 102	lot on Bel-Air	
Plat 14 Lot 110	lot on Bel-Air	
Plat 14 Lot 105	lot on Bel-Air	
Plat 14 Lot 7 & 17	railroad bed	4 acres
Plat 14 Lot 8	railroad bed	8 acres

We believe that with these additional properties (which will give the Town full control over Lake Bel-Air and the railbeds providing public access to the Nipsachuck National Battlefield) that the Town's heritage would be greatly benefited and preserved as a result of this project.

On the site walk, the developer discussed re-routing the northernmost solar panels so that the existing trail on the northern border of the proposed solar field would be preserved. This is highly recommended, as is adding the Green Buffer surrounding the 37 acres of developed solar fields (approximately 30 acres) to the Town's conservation land.

With all of these conditions and after weighing the various benefits to the Town, the NSHA recommends the approval of this project.

Please let me know if there are any questions or concerns and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Hainley".

Peter Hainley

Vice-President

North Smithfield Heritage Association