

#U-22004 Headland Solar – Sarah K. Porter - Opposed

March 15, 2026

This project should be denied by the Michigan Public Service Commission because the process as outlined by PA233 has not been followed. The townships did not deny this project but, in fact, approved it with conditions. Therefore, I do not understand the amount of time and taxpayer resources that have thus far been expended. It seems that if the first step in your process is not to verify the steps taken by the developer with the local municipality, how can you determine the validity of the application you are “reviewing”?

However, because I am sure you will have some legal reason for doing so, I will also state my reasons for opposing this project. The developer did not provide additional information regarding the many concerns the residents raised during their public hearings. Most questions were answered with “we will have to check into that and get back to you.” This resulted in no further information being provided. The application the townships received was actually addressed to the Michigan Public Service Commission, not Conway or Cohoctah Townships. This proves that from the very start the developer was just checking boxes in the process and had absolutely no intention of working with the townships or addressing any concerns brought forward by our community.

Conway Township is the only township in Livingston County that drains water to its surrounding neighbors. We have many concerns about water runoff and the lack of information provided in the application. In fact, the information in the application was almost exactly the same as the information submitted in the application for Acceleration Solar in Ingham County. How can the same plan be submitted for two completely different projects? This shows no actual planning for the specific townships related to the project, or concern for the residents who live here. The application was riddled with boilerplate language instead of proactive planning and engineering specific to our townships.

Additionally, residents raised concerns about these LLCs being insolvent and nowhere to be found when issues arise in the near future. We learned just how quickly the project will be sold and that the developer will not have future responsibility for the promises made at the public hearings or outlined in the project application. The developer makes guarantees that are fruitless as they will have no future ties to the project. This is not NIMBY residents spreading rumors or scare tactics, as many supporters of these projects like to suggest. A simple FOIA request will confirm that for the Headland Solar project multiples checks were received from various LLCs each time they replenished the escrow account with the townships during the application review process. LLCs are intended to separate liability. If multiple LLCs funded the escrow, who is actually on the hook for any future issues? Their business practices offer a glimpse of the lack of concern for future issues related to the project and strongly suggest that it will not be their problem or concern.

Many people are questioning why this project is so large. One of Ranger Power's other projects, Acceleration Solar, is only 873 acres and 90MW. Why should one community, two townships, bear the brunt of such a large project? In fact, it would be larger than any solar facility currently in Michigan. The list of participating parcel owners answers that very question. The application states there are 44 participating parcels owned by 12 private landowners, totaling approximately 2,375 acres for this 220MW project. What the application does not state is that 28 percent of the 44 parcels participating in the project are owned by a direct relative of the applicant, Headland Solar. A total of 632.82 acres of the 2,375 acres contained in the project are owned by the family of the Director of Development at Ranger Power. You scratch my back and I will scratch yours at its finest.

The 2020 census for Conway and Cohoctah Townships shows populations at approximately 3,608 and 3,246, respectively. This is a total of 6,854 residents in these two communities. This project is driven by 12 landowners. Twelve. This screams collateral damage for 99.99 percent of the remaining, non-participating residents who live here. Property rights are fundamental, but zoning laws exist to ensure one landowner's rights do not infringe on the rights of another. A project of this magnitude absolutely infringes on the rights of the remaining residents in this community. Some of us are not large landowners, but we are all entitled to only one vote, whether we own two acres or thousands. The decision of a few to alter the entire landscape of a community where people have chosen to raise their families, drive great distances to get anywhere, and invest in their biggest retirement asset is, in fact, a violation of the health, safety, and general welfare of the rest of us.

If developers want communities to accept these projects, they need to be done on a smaller scale and properly placed in industrially zoned locations because solar generation of electricity, when it happens, is industrial activity. Calling a spade a spade...if it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it is likely to be a duck. Rural residents did not move to the country to have the landscape changed into miles of industrial fencing and infrastructure.

I hear over and over again how these public comments mean nothing and do nothing. Just as the steps taken by Ranger Power in our application process suggest, the PSC also appears to be just checking boxes. You may have the final say, but I still have a voice. With that voice, I am stating that I oppose this project, and I am asking you to holster the rubber stamp that seems to be so quickly drawn and consider the 99.99 percent of the residents in this community who are the non-participating collateral damage.

Sarah K Porter,
Conway Township Resident