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“Our best opportunity to move Amherst in the direction of greater energy independence and greater environmental responsibility lies in solar” – John P. Musante

Dear Amherst Resident,

You are receiving this letter because you are an abutter to one of the Town’s two landfills. In response to a commitment by former Town Manager John P. Musante and the Select Board in developing solar, the Town recently announced its intent to move forward with projects at both the Old and New Landfills. Representatives of SunEdison, the largest global renewable energy developer, examined roof top solar as well as other sites in Amherst and advised the Town that its best opportunity to meet the Town’s energy needs are to develop solar projects at both the Old and New Landfill locations.

As the Town moves forward it is looking to reach out to community members for input on these proposals. The Town held a Community Information Session on Solar on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 as the first in a series of outreach sessions. You may view Amherst Media’s coverage of this session at: <https://amherstmedia.org/content/solar-amherst>. **A second meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 27th at 7 PM in the Amherst Regional Middle School Auditorium.** In addition the Town has posted a webpage with information from Sun Edison, a brief history and timeline of the landfills, as well as Comprehensive Site Assessment documentation for both landfills. The webpage will be updated as more information becomes available and may be viewed by going to the Town’s website: <http://www.amherstma.gov/2196/2015-Solar-Landfill>.

Sun Edison has created preliminary maps of both landfill locations and describes the sites as follows:



Figure 1 Northern Landfill Potential Layout

“Reviewing the Northern Landfill, SunEdison believes that this site is a great candidate for Solar Development...being already fenced and sheltered from neighbors by tall trees and thick forests. Given the topography, Sun Edison believes that a 3,700 kW array is viable. This design is projected to produce 4,649,000 kWh in its first year.”



Figure 2 Southern Landfill Potential Layout

“SunEdison has calculated the aggregate load of the Town and Regional School district to be approximately 7 MW of capacity. As such we have designed the southern portion of the landfill to make up the remainder of the 7 MW. We have designed a system of 3,298kW. Given the permitting complexities experienced previously on this site, we’ve attempted to ensure that our design leaves a significant buffer between the neighboring properties to the west of the site. Given that this design uses 360W modules, we are able to fit significant capacity ... with a much smaller footprint than previously pursued. This system is projected to produce 4,114,000 kWh in its first year of operation. “

We hope that you will join us for the next Community Information Session on Solar on Tuesday, October 27th. It is our hope that we can have a meaningful and productive conversation with community members. Input from a series of community conversations will develop Amherst’s best solar opportunities. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at ciccarellos@amherstma.gov or by phone at (413) 259-3149.

Respectfully,

Stephanie Ciccarello, Sustainability Coordinator