

**Brookens Administrative
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CASE NO. 162-S-25
SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM #2
May 29, 2025

Petitioners: Mahomet IL Solar 1, LLC, c/o Summit Ridge Energy LLC, via agent Moira Cronin, Senior Manager, Project Development, and participating landowners Paul Nurmi Trustee, and Greater Heritage Farms LLC

Request: Authorize a Community PV Solar Farm with a total nameplate capacity of 4.99 megawatts (MW), including access roads and wiring, in the AG-2 Zoning District, and including the following waivers of standard conditions:

Part A: A waiver for not entering into a Roadway Upgrade and Maintenance Agreement or waiver thereof with the relevant local highway authority prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals, per Section 6.1.5 G.(1)

Part B: A waiver for locating the PV Solar Farm less than one and one-half miles from an incorporated municipality per Section 6.1.5 B.(2)a.

Part C: A waiver for locating the PV Solar Farm 65 feet from a non-participating lot that is 10 acres or less in area in lieu of the minimum required separation of 240 feet between the solar farm fencing and the property line, per Section 6.1.5 D.(3)a.

Part D: A waiver for providing financial assurance for the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan in the form of a surety bond, in-lieu of a letter of credit per Section 6.1.5 Q.

Other waivers may be necessary.

Location: Approximately 36 acres on two tracts of land with PIN's 15-13-17-100-012 (52.66 acres) and 15-13-17-200-010 (43.17 acres), totaling 95.83 acres on the South side of US Highway 150, in the West Half of the Northeast Quarter and the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 17 Township 20 North, Range 7 East of the Third Principal Meridian, in Mahomet Township, commonly known as farmland owned by Greater Heritage Farms LLC and Paul Nurmi Trustee.

Site Area: Approximately 36 acres on two tracts of land totaling 95.83 acres

Time Schedule for Development: As soon as possible

Prepared by: **Charlie Campo**
Senior Planner
John Hall
Zoning Administrator
Trevor Partin
Associate Planner

STATES ATTORNEY INFORMATION REGARDING WAIVER PART D

As mentioned in Supplemental Memo #1 dated May 22, 2025, the petitioner has requested a waiver to provide financial assurance for the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan in the form of a surety bond in lieu of a letter of credit.

The Champaign County State's Attorney's Office (SAO) has provided an email regarding the relative merits and concerns regarding a surety bond versus a letter of credit. Board members will be provided copies of the SAO email, but the copies need to be returned to staff at the end of the meeting.

The information provided in the SAO email is similar to the information in Attachment F to Supplemental Memo #1 regarding the relative merits and concerns regarding a surety bond versus a letter of credit.

The SAO points out that the Illinois Public Construction Bond Act allows the use of surety bonds for State construction contracts but requires a minimum credit rating of A- for the company providing the surety bond.

Importantly, the SAO email states "...surety bond collection frequently requires a lawsuit to recover, while a letter of credit is a much simpler process...". Collecting on a letter of credit is just a matter of presenting the necessary documents to the bank that holds the letter of credit.

The SAO email is consistent with the Norton Rose Fulbright article that was part of Attachment F to Supplemental Memorandum #1. The article recommends that one should "...craft the surety bond to minimize the disadvantages of a surety bond compared to a letter of credit".

The SAO email provides the Board with substantial evidence to recommend either denial or approval of the waiver.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

P&Z Staff has received several email comments from the public after the previous memo was distributed. One of the emails was from a neighboring resident that submitted comments prior to the first public hearing on February 27, 2025. The remaining comments are from residents that have not previously submitted comments. See attachments A through F.

ATTACHMENTS

- A Email from Dave and Cheryl Sproul received 5/27/25, previous email received 2/26/25
- B Email from Lisa Fredericksen received 5/27/25
- C Email from Anita Johnson received 5/28/25
- D Email from Katie Sheridan received 5/28/25
- E Email from Kitty Grubb received 5/28/25
- F Email from George Grubb received 5/28/25

From: Dave Sproul <dsproul32@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 11:52 AM
To: zoningdept
Cc: Cheryl Sproul
Subject: Case 162-S-25 Mahomet Solar Farm

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

We are writing in opposition to the proposed Mahomet Solar Farm along Rt 150 just west of the Mahomet city line and related requests for waivers.

(Case 162-S-25)

After reading the proposals and application for waivers to existing ordinances, we find no concrete information as to how this project will benefit the Mahomet community, and in particular the nearby adjoining neighborhoods, in any way.

Our property is located on S. Bryarfield Ct. just south of the proposed solar panel installation location.

We have many questions...here are a few...

1. How will the energy produced by this solar installation benefit Mahomet neighborhoods? In other words, will our monthly electric bills go **down** as a result of this new "green energy" solar farm?
2. What is the total cost to build and continually maintain this installation? How much of that cost is being subsidized by federal, state, county, and/or local governments (**IE: our tax dollars**)?
3. What is the real impact on nearby property values? We are very concerned that this will have a negative impact, devaluing our property.
4. *Regarding #3 above...* Will the Champaign County Assessor be re-evaluating all adjacent neighborhoods and reducing property assessments and lowering our property tax accordingly?
5. *One final question for today....* Would any member of this Zoning Board want a solar farm built next to **your** property? You are voting on a project that will negatively affect those of us that live in this area, but will have no impact on yours.

We have many other environmental concerns that we have submitted in previous emails to the Zoning Board.

This project is not needed or wanted in our area and the proposed location is too close to the Mahomet city line and too close to nearby residential neighborhoods.

We urge the Zoning Board to vote *NO* on the waivers requested by Mahomet IL Solar 1, LLC, c/o Summit Ridge Energy LLC

--

Dave & Cheryl Sproul

408 S. Bryarfield Ct.

Mahomet, IL 61853

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217-649-1941

217-586-2597

Charles W. Campo

From: Lisa FREDERICKSEN <dkfreder@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 12:56 PM
To: zoningdept
Subject: Proposed Mahomet Solar Farm

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

Good afternoon. I appreciate your time in reading my comments on the proposed solar farm on the west side of Mahomet.

I vehemently oppose the solar farm for a variety of reasons.

Although solar farm supporters will speak of planting wildflowers to attract birds, and other small wildlife there is no information that substantiates this. Drive by a solar farm. You will not see vegetation or wildlife, including birds.

The theory is that the panels are installed and of course the land owner benefits financially, but the hard numbers on reduced costs to area residents is not clear and tends to be based on theory not any actual data.

What is not discussed, in addition to the eyesore it causes is that the land, currently farmable or available for use for housing is the "life" of the solar farm. After 20 years the farms are often considered obsolete. And those who are in favor of the solar farm will tout that the materials will be taken down and recycled. The reality is most urban areas have come to the conclusion that the financial cost of recycling as well as the drain on water use for the recycling process, etc. makes simple glass and plastic recycling no longer a viable asset to the community. Yet, we are to believe that all these installed pieces will be recycled? And new soil often needs to be brought in or reconditioned?

Health concerns have not been studied fully or for long enough, in my opinion. People don't want to live by high wire power lines just because they look unsightly; there is real data that women who live close to high power lines have an inordinately high rate of miscarriage. It took years before people were able to see these trends. What might we find out in 5, 10, 15 years about the health concerns of those living by the solar farm?

What happens if weather destroys some of the panels? Will the owner be responsible for repairs? Are those rules written into Champaign County Code Enforcement?

Mahomet is such a quaint small town, known for its good schools and farms that make up part of the Midwestern bread basket. People know what high taxes are; because they pay them. Are most people interested in adding a solar farm because their utility rates MIGHT drop slightly? I for one, am not interested in losing the land to what I think will best be described as an experiment in Mahomet.

Thank you for your time,

Lisa Fredericksen

Sent from my iPhone

Charles W. Campo

From: Anita Johnson <drdrink@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 7:46 AM
To: zoningdept
Cc: mikeandmarymurphy@sbcglobal.net; Spring Lake Treasurer; dcousert@hotmail.com; simplyplumbing@gmail.com
Subject: Case #162-S-25 Solar Farm vs Spring Lake -Thursday meeting 5/29/25 .

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

Case #162-S-25 Solar Farm vs Spring Lake -Thursday meeting 5/29/25 .

To whom it may concern:

After researching several articles on solar farms and their affects on an area, I am strongly against the solar farms near Spring Lake for several reasons as listed below.

There are regulations that solar farms are not to be located within 1.86 miles of residential areas - There is a reason for this and it should not be violated / or "waived" at the risk of all the people who have built their lives in this area.

There is a health risk for residents: headaches, fatigue, sleep disturbance, increased cancer risk, decreased life expectancy.

Decrease in property value. No one wants to live by a solar farm.

Soil erosion, sediment run-off, drainage issues, flooding, and irreversible damage to farmland.

Destruction of the ecosystem.
Environmental impact: kills birds, small animals and insects

Solar farms have chemicals that can contaminate the groundwater and the well water. Everyone at Spring Lake is on a well - and the Lake is spring fed from and underground stream. Contamination of the water would be a disaster. No one should gamble with the water in this community.

Noise pollution - The strong electromagnetic field emits a humming sound- disturbing those around.

Solar farms radiate heat and increase the actual temperature in the region.

Solar farms reflect light glare from the sun.

It takes up valuable farmland. It causes irreversible damage to the land - in other words, if a solar farm is placed on fertile soil, it destroys it and it cannot be converted back to farmland.

If the land owners no longer want to farm - instead of putting a whole community at risk - why not sell or lease their property to someone who loves farming and will continue to produce food for people for generations to come. We have some of the richest soil in the nation right here! Why not feed the nation?

The solar farm should be moved to an area where people do not live - Abide by the recommendation that solar farms not be within 1.86 miles of residents.

Why not move it by the interstate? Or areas where no one lives?

Please put an End to this project - The people of Spring Lake do NOT want it. It is a huge risk to all who live here, and would be an injustice to all who have built their lives in this community.

Anita Johnson
Concerned resident of Spring Lake

Listed below are some of the articles with information on the devastating facts concerning solar farms.

<https://michiganwhitetailproperties.com/blog/the-risks-of-solar-farms-over-fertile-land-agri-environmental-implications/>

<https://www.emf-risks.com/health-risks-living-near-solar-farm/>

<https://greencoast.org/living-next-to-a-solar-farm/>

https://ecowowlife.com/disadvantages-of-living-near-a-solar-farm/#google_vignette

Charles W. Campo

From: Katie Sheridan <katiesheridan4@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 10:18 AM
To: zoningdept
Subject: Mahomet solar farm

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

I am a resident of Mahomet township and Champaign County, and I do not want the zoning department to grant any waivers for the solar farm project. The requests are unnecessary and defy the very nature of why restrictions are in place. Furthermore, I strongly oppose the project as a long term sustainable energy source, and reject any claims for long term or short term benefits to the residents of Mahomet or Champaign County.

Respectfully,
Katie Sheridan

Charles W. Campo

From: Kitty Hulmes <kittyhulmes@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 12:25 PM
To: zoningdept
Subject: Case number 162 – S – 25. Objection to rezoning for a solar farm.

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

I have lived on Spring Lake for 40 years. I object to rezoning the farmland just north of Spring Lake. Case number 162 – S – 25.

How would you like to look out your bedroom window and all you see is solar panels instead of green trees and wildlife like wild turkey, deer, many varieties of birds and Canada geese.

Solar panels will interfere with the migration of many birds who follow the Sangamon river, and fly this migration route every year. So no more bird population at Spring Lake.

The reason we moved here was to be close to nature away from noise and pollution. the solar panels will interfere with all wildlife with their strong electromagnetic field and the noise.
All residents at Spring Lake are on Wells. Solar farms have chemicals that can contaminate the groundwater and the well water. The runoff could also contaminate and destroy our lake.

A solar farm so close will lower our property values.

This is 36 acres of prime farm land, why take it out of production. Why not put a solar farm in remote areas where there are no homes/people.

Please do not allow this solar farm to be placed at our back door

Thank you,
Kitty I. Grubb

GoSent from Kitty's iPhone

From: George Grubb <georgeagrubb@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 12:47 PM
To: zoningdept
Subject: Case number 162 – S – 25 rezoning objection near Spring Lake

CAUTION: External email, be careful when opening.

Good morning, my name is George Grubb. I am married to Kitty Grubb, who is a long-term resident of Spring Lake. I see no value in the solar farm being this close to Spring Lake and its residents. I was told that the zoning commission had enacted a rule of no solar farm closer to residential property than 1.8 miles. I also have heard that this has been waived. Who has the power to waive this? Did any of the people who are affected by this waving have a voice in it? Clearly the solar farm can do nothing but harm the people at Spring Lake while lining the pocket of people unknown. As you've heard you're taking away 36 acres of prime farm ground you are lowering the property value of the homes at Spring Lake. and it does nothing for we the people who live here. There are many sites much more suitable for a solar farm. I strongly recommend that you reject this application for a solar farm sincerely, GeorgeAGrubb – a concern citizen.
Sent from my iPhone