

From: [Carmen Deling](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Lake Charlotte Solar Project
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2026 11:13:25 AM

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To Whom It May Concern Regarding the Lake Charlotte Solar Project,

My name is Carmen Anders Deling, and I live very near the proposed site for the Lake Charlotte Solar Project. This issue is deeply personal to me because of my family's long history with the land involved.

I was raised on one of the farms included in this project area. My grandparents owned the Anders farm, and they built a second house on the property for my parents when they were married, and I lived on this Anders farm for twenty five years of my life. I still live only a short distance away. While I hold strong personal concerns about this project, I also recognize that a sibling I care deeply about is involved with it. This places me in a difficult position, but my concerns for the land and our community compel me to speak.

My grandparents endured many difficult years while trying to make a living from farming. At one point they even lost the farm, but through perseverance and determination they were able to regain it. They were hardworking, traditional German farmers who grew most of their own food on this very land. The rich, productive soil of Martin County allowed them to raise four children there, including my own father.

My father lived and worked on that farm his entire life, continuing the farming tradition he learned from his father, Carl. After he married, he and my mother raised three children, including myself, my sister and my brother who continues to farm the same land today. For generations, this land has supported our family and many others in this community.

Because of this history, the proposed project deeply troubles me. When I think about what my grandparents and parents would feel if they could see this happening, it breaks my heart. I knew them well and this is not what they would have wanted to see this land become. This project would significantly change the character of our area. What has long been a quiet rural setting with open farmland would become a large industrial solar facility located very close to our homes. Instead of fields, the landscape would be dominated by rows of solar panels, fencing, equipment, and infrastructure that do not belong in a prime agricultural residential

area. It would permanently alter the rural environment and the farming landscape that defines this community.

I understand the importance of renewable energy and recognize the role it plays in today's world. However, the permanent loss of highly productive farmland for this purpose is very concerning. Martin County has long been known for having some of the most valuable agricultural soil in the country. Prime farmland is a limited and essential resource that should be preserved for long-term agricultural use. It is every bit as valuable as the need for renewable energy.

There are many other potential locations for solar development that would not require removing prime farmland from production for decades. Solar projects could prioritize rooftops, commercial buildings, less productive land, or other already-developed areas rather than converting highly productive farmland located next to people's homes. It is difficult to understand why such a large amount of valuable farmland should be taken out of production when better alternatives may exist.

Agriculture has always been the backbone of our community, providing not only food production but also supporting the local, regional, and state economy. When productive farmland is permanently removed from use, it raises an important question about what future generations will rely on for their livelihoods and for the continued strength of our agricultural communities.

I am also concerned about the potential impact on property values. Many residents in this area have invested their entire lives financially into their homes and land. Living next to a large industrial solar facility could make our properties less desirable to future buyers. If property values decline, local homeowners may be forced to bear the financial loss while the developer benefits from the project.

Additionally, we have never received a clear explanation for why this particular location was selected. Location matters. Solar development should prioritize locations that minimize impacts on prime farmland and nearby residents.

For these reasons — the close proximity to homes, the permanent loss of prime farmland, the potential decline in property values, and the broader impacts on our rural community — I respectfully ask the Commission to carefully consider the residents who live here and who will be directly affected by this decision. I ask that you evaluate this proposal as if you were the ones living next to this project and deny the site permits for the Lake Charlotte Solar Project.

Thank you for your time and for considering the concerns of the residents in our neighborhood and community.

Sincerely,
Carmen Anders Deling

Rutland Township, Martin County