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City OKs resolution against planned solar project in Copake

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File photoA photo of solar panels.

HUDSON — The Common Council unanimously approved at its meeting Tuesday a resolution opposing state approval of the construction of the Hecate Shepherd’s Run Solar project in Copake until the company can prove the project will not negatively impact the Taghkanic Creek Watershed, which supplies the city with water.

The council joined the towns of Claverick, Hillsdale, and Taghkanic, which have also passed a similar resolution.

The Shepherd's Run project is a proposed 60-megawatt solar farm that would be built on a 220-acre parcel on Route 23 and Route 7 in Copake and Craryville.

“One of our primary concerns is that this project uses up a lot of farmland in the Town of Copake,” Copake Town Supervisor Jeanne Mettler said at Tuesday’s council meeting. “And now, more recently, it has come to our attention that the project will be built on the Taghkanic watershed.”

While Copake officials have tried working with Hecate on the solar project plan, Mettler said the company has not been responsive.

“The Town of Copake is not opposed to this project,” Mettler said. “Not because we don’t understand the value of renewable energy, and not because we don’t believe in climate change. We believe that this installation is too large for Copake. We have expressed our willingness to work with Hecate to come up with a better plan but they haven’t conceded to any of our requests.”

Mettler made it clear that she’s not against the project, but said the state should not grant approval of the company’s application or deem it complete until Hecate can ensure that the solar installation will not negatively impact water from the Taghkanic Creek.

“All that we’re asking for in this resolution is for Hecate’s application not to be granted until they can ensure that the project won’t negatively impact the water in Hudson or any of the surrounding towns”, Mettler said.

The Taghkanic Creek flows through Hillsdale, Copake and Taghkanic and supplies water to Hudson, and also supports clean drinking water in the Towns of Taghkanic, Hillsdale, Claverack and Copake.