

Despite the multitude of issues with the project site which Sensible Solar has been talking about for years, ORES made the decision to issue a draft permit. Why? Because the 94-c process is flawed. The “community” effectively has no say in what happens. The regulations provide for “mitigants” to any issue raised which are essentially “feel good” measures that really don’t mitigate any identified issues. Let’s face it, ORES was established because developers were unhappy with NY State’s existing permitting process which they felt was overly burdensome to developers. So, ORES was created, with the sole purpose of issuing permits for renewable energy projects in order to meet the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act’s arbitrary greenhouse gas reduction goals according to an unreasonable timeline. Even if NY achieves this goal (which is highly unlikely according to a number of sources, including NYSIO), it will have ZERO impact on global emissions, as NY State emits less than ½ of 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions. What it *will* do is enrich developers, jeopardize the environment, permanently remove NY State’s valuable farmland, impair electric grid reliability, result in higher costs for electricity, and, in Copake’s case, also forever change the rural and landscape and agricultural character of the Town, things we all cherish. To quote NY State Senators Hinchey and Harckham who had strongly urged ORES work with Hecate to find a more suitable location for the project: “While we understand the necessity and support the practice of building renewable energy projects to meet the needs of our state, we cannot exchange an energy crisis for a food crisis, a water crisis, or a conservation crisis.” Bottom line, Sensible Solar believes that NY State’s blind pursuit of the CLCPA’s goals to the exclusion of all else, and flawed climate policy goals, will negatively impact NY residents forever.