

## COPAKE

# Columbia County group comes out against Shepherd's Run Solar farm

BY SPENSER WALSH

Resistance to the proposed Shepherd's Run Solar farm proposed in the town is building.

The group Sensible Solar For Rural New York, which has long advocated against the construction of the solar farm, held a community meeting Saturday where speakers argued against the solar farm's construction.

The event came after the state Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission granted Illinois-based Hecate Energy a draft permit in November to build the 215-acre, 42-megawatt solar farm.

"It even exceeded our expectations," said Jean Halloran, who is on Sensible Solar's leadership team. "We had about 100 people, all of whom were very passionate and listening very intently. I think they felt very motivated and very disenfranchised."

The meeting comes ahead of public hearings on the project to be held with Hecate at Copake Town Hall on Jan. 21 and 22.

State Department of Public Service Public Affairs Director James Denn highlighted the role public comments will play in the status of the project. The state Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission is under the public service department's purview.

"Public comment is a very important element of proceedings such as this, and comments received will be carefully reviewed and considered as part of the ongoing proceeding," Denn said Monday.

Hecate's Senior Director of Development Matt Levine also highlighted the importance of the public comment process.

"Hecate Energy is continuing to advance the Shepherd's Run Solar project through New York state's established review and permitting process and we look forward to the state's decision following a thorough and transparent review," Levine said Monday. "Our goal is to be a responsible long-term

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JEAN HALLORAN

Roughly 100 people were in attendance to hear speakers in opposition to the proposed Shepherd's Run Solar farm in Copake on Saturday.



LOUISE ROBACK

Former MSNOW commentator and Columbia County resident Malcolm Nance speaks Sunday at 7th Street Park in Hudson at a rally against the actions of immigration and Customs Enforcement.

## HUDSON

# Two liberal groups protest Trump administration

BY SPENSER WALSH

Two protests against federal government policies were held in the city over the weekend.

On Saturday, at the intersection of 5th and Warren streets, the group Columbia County for Palestine hosted an emergency rally from 1-2 p.m. Its demand were to get immigration and Customs Enforcement "out of our communities," the

"U.S. out of Venezuela," and to "end the genocide in Gaza, according to a flier advertising the event.

The following day, a group of local activists hosted an "ICE OUT" rally against the actions of ICE agents. The rally took place at 7th Street Park and drew between 100 and 200 people, according to organizer Judy Nelson.

"It all came together very fast,"

Nelson said of the protest. "We had a list of some people who had come to our earlier protests, so we emailed them, and we put it out on social media. Malcolm Nance, a very big media commentator, he put it on social media. He brought in some people, as well. We had maybe 25 people who actually signed up,

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# Americans increasingly rejecting political parties, poll shows

BY LINLEY SANDERS AND AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are increasingly rejecting the two major political parties, according to new polling.

Just under half, 45%, of U.S. adults now identify as independents, a new Gallup survey found. That's a substantial shift from 20 years ago, when closer to one-third of Americans said they didn't identify with the Democrats or Republicans.

This group appears, increasingly, to be driven by their unhappiness with the party in power, according to Gallup's analysis. That's a dynamic that could be good for Democrats in this year's midterm elections, but doesn't promise lasting loyalty. Independents have gravitated toward the Democrats over the past year when asked which party they lean toward, Gallup found, but attitudes toward the party haven't gotten warmer. That suggests that the Democrats' gains are probably more related to independents' increasingly sour views of President Donald Trump.

Younger people, in particular, are rejecting the parties at much higher rates than older generations. More than half of Generation Z and Millennials identify as political independents, while a majority of older generations side with a party. That's different from the past, when more young adults identified with the

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# DOJ investigation of Fed Chair Powell sparks backlash, support for Fed independence

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AND JOSH BOAK

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration's criminal investigation of Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell appeared on Monday to be emboldening defenders of the U.S. central bank, who pushed back against President Donald Trump's efforts to exert more control over the Fed.

The backlash reflected the overarching stakes in determining the balance of power within the federal government and the path of the U.S. economy at a time of uncertainty about inflation and a slowing job market. This has created a sense among some Republican lawmakers and leading economists that the Trump administration had overstepped the Fed's independence by sending sub-

poenas.

The criminal investigation — a first for a sitting Fed chair — sparked an unusually robust response from Powell and a full-throated defense from three former Fed chairs, a group of top economic officials and even Republican senators tasked with voting on Trump's eventual pick to replace Powell as Fed chair when his term expires in May.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that Trump did not direct his Justice Department to investigate Powell, who has proven to be a foil for Trump by insisting on setting the Fed's benchmark interest rates based on the data instead of the president's wishes.

"One thing for sure, the president's made it quite clear, is Jerome Powell

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JULIA DEMAREE NIKHINSON

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, right, and President Donald Trump look over a document of cost figures during a visit to the Federal Reserve, July 24, 2025, in Washington.



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## INSIDE



State comptroller urges people to spend holiday gift cards

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## WEATHER



Partly sunny  
High 42/Low 36  
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