

Thank you Sen Rogers, for all your hard work, and your kind words---and thank you to the citizen organizers of this entire event---you are the heroes----you are the sleeping tigers that have been awakened by the onslaught of the INDUSTRIAL RENEWABLE JUGGERNAUT. And you have proven today just what true democracy is all about. Right here---right now--- in these halls today---THIS is true constituent democracy---and I cannot thank you, Senator Rogers--enough for being the standard bearer for this magnificent democratic statement, and a leader willing to work for positive change.

As an introduction, here, I am going to tell you all a story----and I don't want you to panic----this is not a NOVEL---just a short but important story. It is a story a lot like the masterpiece---A TALE OF TWO CITIES--the modern version----Rutland City----and Rutland Town.

Charles Dickens had a historic way of talking about REVOLUTION in his novel. Now---we're not "STORMING THE BASTILLE"---but we ARE most certainly bringing a needed message to the ARISTOCRACY. Although 150 years removed----we are much like the peasants---the worker bees---the thousands of local planning and zoning officials, and select board members from top to bottom of this proud, proud VERMONT---OUR STATE-----OR SO WE THOUGHT.

The very stark cultural, social, geographic, and political differences between Rutland Town and its neighbor, Rutland city are paramount in this discussion. GMPs predecessor, CVPS, was headquartered in Rutland City, with millions of executive salary employment dollars and all the trappings of the Home Office Structure. When all that abruptly left the City, what emerged was an ENERGY INNOVATION CENTER as some salve for those wounds----and a masterful collaboration between GMP and the city officials, that allowed those officials to specifically say where they wanted solar installations-----and by inference, where they did NOT want them. This was the genesis of the SOLAR CAPITAL OF VERMONT----and indeed New England----lots of press on this subject----the solar capital of the world-----HOW WONDERFUL.

Rutland City's neighbor to the N S E W , Rutland Town, three times the geographic area with only one third the population, was not anywhere near as fortunate---or let's say WORTHY---of such collaboration. Never once did anyone from GMP ever show even the slightest courtesy of requesting a meeting with any of our town officials even though their entire Operations Center is located in our town. Not one peep--- Rather----we were greeted with the joint GMP proposal with GRO SOLAR for 9,000 panels on Cold River Road, in a 25 acre Prime Ag parcel in the middle of upscale residential development. Directly adjacent to this parcel is a 50 acre woodlot that the developer plans to totally deforest for a 50,000 panel project. 75 acres of upheaval for no tangible benefit to our town.

With a groundswell of opposition to this project---and many more in the wings---we were---like so many other small Vermont communities----a bit overwhelmed at both the present and the future challenge we faced without any protection of our well established land use patterns.

We didn't panic----we acted like responsible civic leaders----we PLANNED. And that took the form of researching a basic document for RENEWABLE ENERGY SITING. We then asked our Planning commission to craft changes, modifications and additions to this document and hold hearings and present it to the Select Board. We then did the same, very deliberatively and thoughtfully and with our

own hearing process. Over a year and a half went into this document and we certainly felt that it was a CLEAR, CONCISE STATEMENT OF OUR COMMUNITY'S DESIRES FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY SITING. Indeed, it was, and is, a pretty good document, to say the least. We thought it met the standards established by the "QUEECHE ANALYSIS" perfectly. We added it to our Town Plan.

We entered this document into the PSB process in the Gro Solar case. In spite of the long and tedious quality hours spent by our planning and executive officials on this document, and two public hearings---we were basically told by our own PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD that this document was only appropriate for use in the BATHROOM---but certainly NOT in their own hearing room. They summarily dismissed it---rejected all of its key provisions---and sent us packing.

Now---you may say---well, that is pretty frustrating---so what do we do next? Well----we are not anarchists---WE FOLLOW THE LAW. So we---as a small, yet determined community, took our case to our SUPREME COURT in hopes that they, as the last State arbiters in this dispute, would feel, as we have, that the PSB must honor its own mission and principles---AND ALSO THE LAW--- and not be allowed to summarily dismiss the communities of this state with decision after decision that disregards local planning. That case is pending as we speak today.

But we couldn't stop there. Knowing that we were but one small DAVID trying to fight the GOLIATH of Federal energy credits, tax credits, Renewable Energy Credits, Millionaire investors mostly from out of state, and the entire INDUSTRIAL RENEWABLE COMBINE--- WITH ALL THEIR GREENSPEAK-----we had to have more help---a lot more help. And so----we drafted the RUTLAND TOWN SOLAR RESOLUTION----with all its 'whereas' and 'wherebys' and so forth---and the RESOLVED----that's the important part----comes down to THIS----WE WANT THE LANDS OF OUR STATE BACK----TOWN BY TOWN. WE DO NOT WANT DEFERENCE----WE DO NOT WANT CONSIDERATION DUE OR OTHERWISE----WHAT WE WANT IS STANDING----WE WANT LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING DOCUMENTS TO CONTROL LAND USE DECISIONS WITHIN A MUNICIPALITY----NO MORE----AND CERTAINLY NO LESS. I sent this to every town in our state inviting them to join us in our quest for fairness and democracy----DEMOCRACY FOR WE---THE PEOPLE. And here we are---and now we are not so puny. I THINK OUR FOUNDING FATHERS WOULD BE PROUD OF US. Our fervent hope is that our leaders will not make the fatal mistake of the past with the response of "LET THEM EAT CAKE"-----WE WOULD MUCH PREFER THE GOURMET MEAL OF OUR PRECIOUS, SCENIC, AND LONG CHERISHED UNSPOILED LANDSCAPE. Please give those rights back to us. At the beginning---like the fearless lieutenant leading my men in VietNam-----I looked behind me and didn't see many troops---oooooh my gosh-----well, guess what---the reinforcements have arrived. WE ARE NOW 86+ TOWNS---OVER 1/2 OF THE REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICTS OF VERMONT----OVER ONE THIRD OF VERMONT LANDSCAPE AND ACREAGE-----OUR FORMER WHIMPER HAS BECOME THE MIGHTY TIGER'S ROAR-----AND WE WILL BE HEARD.

We will be heard because we have many voices. We have the strong and long voice of the VLCT , through Maura Carroll and her very capable director of Public Policy, Karen Horn. VLCT has just published a very powerful and very specific statement on behalf of all its member towns demanding return of land use decisions to VLCT's member towns. OUR LEGISLATURE NEEDS TO HEED THAT MESSAGE.

We have the most powerful visuals and one of the best citizen guides to RENEWABLE SANITY right here today because of the hard work of a man for whom I have the highest regard and respect---he's right here today and his name is Mark Whitworth. Mark, his board, and his website, ENERGIZE VERMONT have focused the bright light of truth on this issue---and eyes are opening at a record pace. He has done all the tedious work of map production, statistical analysis, and crafting of goal statements that are truly inclusive---not exclusionary. He is a true leader and a voice worth listening to. I do---and I am better person---and a more informed person thanks to his voice.

I was not going to do this due to time----but you know--it is ONE MINUTE OF YOUR TIME. Yet these are names that deserve to be stated here and now that represent the grassroots movement throughout our proud state. Citizens like Sally Collopy, and Christine Lang, and Dustin Lang, and , Annette Smith, Anne Morse, Ed Stanak, Peggy Sapphire, Randy Koch, Stephanie Kaplan, Steve Gorelick, Suzanna Jones, Rebecca Boulanger, Dan Fitzgerald, David & Avril Howe, Frank Seawright, Harrison Snapp, Heath Boyer, Judith Jackson, Kathleen Nelson, Liisa Kissel, Lisa Wright Garcia, Luann Therrien, Mac Ingalls, Melodie & Scott McLane, Michael Sanville, Mike Nelson, Nancy Tips, Paul Brouha, Robbin Clark, Ron Holland, Vanessa, Suz Seymour, Shanna Ratner, John Brabant, Noreen Hession, Monique Thurston, Elizabeth Cooper, Steve Wright, Pat Sagui, Lucas B.Snelling, and last, but certainly not least-----Brian and Penny Dubie. Of course---I neglect the many others who I have certainly not included here-----my sincere and heartfelt apology---you should know that we all here acknowledge your hard work and your commitment.

SENATOR JOHN S. RODGERS-----Remember that name---this young leader has shown the foresight and the determination to give voice to all of us who have a simple but powerful message-----WE THE PEOPLE WANT OUR BIRTHRIGHT----THE LOCAL CONTROL OF OUR LANDS---BACK. It is with a humble heart that I thank you Senator, for my name here is inconsequential. At 71---my years are more numbered than most---but you, SENATOR, have given our voice strength here today----the strength and the ROAR of 86 proud communities throughout our entire state-----LISTEN TO US-----WE ARE A STRONG AND POWERFUL VOTING CONSTITUENCY AND GROWING LARGER AND STRONGER EVERY DAY--
--AND WE WILL BE HEARD. Thank you.