



# Village of Maple Park

302 Willow Street ♦ P.O. Box 220 ♦ Maple Park, Illinois 60151

Village Hall: 815-827-3309

Website: <http://www.villageofmaplepark.org>

Approved by the Board of Trustees on  
August 1, 2023

**TOWN HALL/BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, JULY 17, 2023  
7:00 p.m.  
MAPLE PARK CIVIC CENTER  
302 WILLOW STREET, MAPLE PARK**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

President Fahnestock called the Town Hall Special Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Fahnestock led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL/QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

President Fahnestock asked for a roll call to establish a quorum.

Village Clerk Caryn Minor called the roll call and the following Board Members were present: President Suzanne Fahnestock, Trustee Groezinger, Trustee Joy, Trustee Peloso, Trustee Simon and Trustee Speare. Absent: Trustee Ward

Also present were Village Administrator Cheryl Aldridge, Police Chief David Krull, Director of Public Works Lou Larson, Village Treasurer Shannon Warford and Village Clerk Caryn Minor.

Members of the public present are found on the meeting sign in sheet.

President Fahnestock confirmed a quorum was established.

**4. PRESENTATION OF SOLAR PROJECT BY CENERGY**

*Trustee Ward arrived at 7:12 p.m.*

President Fahnestock acknowledged the purpose of tonight's meeting adding it will adjourn no later than 9:00 p.m. President Fahnestock introduced the representatives from Cenergy and asked them to begin their prepared presentation. Cenergy representative Chad Chahbazi, a lead development team member introduced himself and acknowledged his peer John Prock was in attendance today. Mr. Chahbazi quickly gave an overview of Cenergy's experience, financial stability and commitment to communities like Maple Park and how communities can benefit from such projects.

Mr. Chahbazi reviewed the project Cenergy has created for the Village of Maple Park. The solar project would occupy 25 leased acres on Maple Park Road and Pritchard Road. Chahbazi reported the solar farm's life expectancy was estimated at 35 years and then it would be completely removed. Reporting the project would produce little to no noise or traffic. Chahbazi noted the project if approved would begin construction this time next year in 2024.

Mr. Chahbazi reported the project would generate \$30,000 to \$35,000 and the PIN would be attached to the developer not the land owner. Therefore, Cenergy would be paying all the taxes. Chahbazi reported Cenergy would purchase 5 acres from the land owner near the Village's water treatment plant to be donated directly to the Village. He also confirmed the cash donation, that would go directly to the Village to use for any purpose, had been raised to \$600,000. Chahbazi acknowledged a beneficial savings program specifically for Maple Park residents would be set up and the residents that subscribed to the power program would get a 30% discount off their power bills.

Mr. Chahbazi in closing acknowledged this has been his life's work and he is extremely proud of Cenergy and what they do for communities like Maple Park.

#### **5. FACILITATION OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS BY VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR**

Village Administrator Aldridge the facilitator of today's Town Hall Special Board Meeting read the Village of Maple Park Town Hall Rules for public comment out loud.

Administrator Aldridge announced the speakers would be called in the order they signed in and requested they state their names and what street they reside on before they begin speaking.

Roy Christopher approached the podium after being called and stated his name and reported he lived on Pritchard. Mr. Christopher discussed his concerns living in close proximity to the project and discussed how the visual effects would affect him and his family.

Pat Lunardon stated her name and reported she lived on DeKalb Drive. Ms. Lunardon confirmed she had acted solely distributing fliers within the community informing residents of the Town Hall meeting tonight.

Christine Daniels stated her name and reported she lived on Pin Oaks Lane. Ms. Daniels discussed her concerns in regard to the battery that would be onsite at the solar project and questioned why it needed to be placed there. She asked for confirmation Cenergy would be supplying the previously reported training to the fire department. Mr. Chahbazi acknowledged Cenergy's fire training commitment and reported the lithium-ion battery was very safe. Daniels questioned if the solar farm would be removed after the 35-year lease had expired. Mr. Chahbazi responded yes and stated a deactivation plan was a state

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mandate. Ms. Daniels questioned the risk to the farmland and if there would be increased blackouts. Mr. Chahbazi stated there would be no risk to the farmland or of increased blackouts.

Roger Kahl stated his name and reported he lived on Green Street. Mr. Kahl stated while solar farms may take up a lot of farming land, in this situation there is a possibility if this project is not approved in Maple Park Dekalb County could allow this or a similar project closer to the community. He asked Mr. Chahbazi if there would be a subscriber fee on discussed power program and could you unsubscribe any time. Mr. Chahbazi confirmed there was no subscriber fee and you could unsubscribe anytime. In closing Mr. Kahl acknowledged the 7-foot fence the program included to reduce visual effects of the solar farm.

Elizabeth Van Cleve stated her name and reported she lived on DeKalb Drive. Ms. VanCleve confirmed she was in favor of the solar farm, reporting the Village and residents would benefit. She noted times were changing and the benefits far outweighed the negatives.

De Zikis stated her name and reported she lived on Ashton Drive. Ms. Zikis was not in favor or against the solar project. She reported her recent research had her concerned with the project's close proximity to residents. She also had concerns about the batteries, panels creating toxic waste, seepage and the possibility of increased power outages. Mr. Chahbazi addressed her concerns and noted there was no toxic materials in the project, he reported Cenergy has had no issues of seepage at any solar project and recycling plans were being created for solar farm materials. He also noted there was no health risk of exposure from this solar project as it produced only a safe low voltage in comparison to regular power lines.

Catherine Mathews stated her name and reported she lived on DeKalb Drive. Ms. Mathews reported she already had solar panels on her roof and it had been financially beneficial with no problems. She questioned if homes with solar panels could benefit from the project or did her homes panels need to be removed to benefit. Mr. Chahbazi responded that solar roof top homes can not benefit from the project unless the panels were removed. He noted the saving would be similar. Ms. Mathews reported she paid \$35 dollars to rent the panels and her electric bill had had at zero cost.

Bart Shaver stated his name and reported he lived on Inverness. Mr. Shaver questioned what Cenergy's carbon foot print was? He also inquired about the effects of technology as it catches up and passes this and similar solar projects in the future. Mr. Shaver asked President Fahnestock when the Board would vote on the Solar Farm? President Fahnestock responded tomorrow night. Mr. Chahbazi addressed the questions and reported Cenergy used only materials purchased in the U.S.A. He was unsure how to answer the question on Cenergy 's carbon footprint. He noted most materials at Cenergy's solar projects could and would be recycled but could not confirm if it included batteries.

Mike Miller stated his name and reported he lived on Maple Avenue. Mr. Miller questioned who would maintain the solar project's landscaping and controlling of the weeds. Mr. Chahbazi confirmed that Cenergy would manage the property and control the weeds as needed.

Kate Wiltse stated her name and reported she lived on Maple Park Road. Ms. Wiltse questioned the effects the solar project would have on home values. Mr. Chahbazi stated studies have been done by private companies that indicate there is no impact on property values.

Taylor Miller stated her name and reported she lived on Pritchard Road. Ms. Miller confirmed her property was in very close proximity to the solar project site. She relayed her concerns about the increased monetary donation to the Village. She added Cenergy and the property owner would benefit from this solar project not the residents or Village of Maple Park. Ms. Miller asked the Village President if there were plans to enlarge the waste- water treatment plant. President Fahnestock responded there was not a current plan to enlarge the plant however if the Village grows this could change. Mr. Chahbazi responded to the \$600,000 donation confirming it was generated and encouraged by the State and other jurisdictions had gotten monetary donations. He confirmed this was a State funded program essentially from tax dollars. He noted again the fence would help with the visual effects. Ms. Miller questioned if there would be adequate piping for the fire department and would dry pipes be installed. Mr. Chahbazi reported there is a very low fire risk.

Brad Miller stated his name and reported he owned the property on Pritchard that Taylor Miller lived at. Mr. Miller relayed his concern for the drainage tiles located on the project's site. He questioned if damaged, would the tiles be repaired. Mr. Chahbazi reported the project would be designed to avoid the drainage tiles across the property and if damaged, he noted the tiles would be repaired. Mr. Miller reported the historical flooding that residents were aware of off of Maple Park Road. Mr. Chahbazi reported that Cenergy would be following all State guidelines.

Andrea Helm stated her name and reported she lived on Burlington Drive. Ms. Helm questioned Cenergy's maintenance practices and commitment for the solar site and noted it will affect the property values.

Christine Daniels stood again and stated if the town could not support growth, it should be restricted. Ms. Daniels also questioned who monitored the project for maintenance issues and was it possible the lease would be renewed after the 35 years. Mr. Chahbazi responded the fence would again help with the visual effects of the project and reported Cenergy's design included the placement of pollinators around the rows and near the modules. He added as far as weed management this would be managed as needed. Mr. Chahbazi explained how technicians would be continually monitoring the project and its modules for other issues.

Trustee Groezinger questioned how many residents could subscribe to the program and get the 30% discount. Mr. Chahbazi estimated approximately 600 subscribers. He added it would be a ComEd program. He was not able to confirm if roof top solar systems were removed those residents could get the discount.

Village Clerk, Caryn Minor read an emailed statement from Dorothy Rzepka, that email is attached.

Emily Eichholzer stood, stated her name and reported she lived on Elizabeth Street. She questioned if the modules could crack, break or leak and what is their lifetime workability? Mr. Chahbazi noted no usual issues with the modules, adding if they had any damage, they would be repaired or replaced. He added the modules had no effects to the environment. Mr. Chahbazi noted power lines next to your home have more voltage than these low voltage safe modules.

Trustee Ward suggested the review of the Public Act 102-1123.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Peloso with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Groezinger to adjourn. Motion carried by a voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Caryn Minor, Village Clerk