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COMPLETE

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**Q1** **Town**

Please select whether you work for a town or county.

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**Q2**

Which County or Municipality do you work for?

Town of Glen

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**Q3**

Your Title:

Planning Board Secretary

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**Q4** **No**

Are you also a farmer?

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**Q5** **Yes**

Are solar developers proposing or building solar projects on farmland within your county or municipality?

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**Q6** **Very familiar**

How familiar are you with these solar projects?

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**Q7** Respondent skipped this question

How has solar development in your community impacted your ability to rent land? (Please check all that apply)

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**Q8** Respondent skipped this question

Please check any of the following that apply to hosting solar panels on your farm to generate electricity for off-farm use:

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**Q9** Respondent skipped this question

Please choose whether you think solar developers should be allowed to site solar panels to generate electricity for off farm use on the following farmland types throughout New York:

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**Q10** Respondent skipped this question

Are you, or is the current landowner of your farmland, leasing farmland to a solar developer to generate electricity for off farm use?

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**Q11** Respondent skipped this question

How may this solar project impact the farm operation over time?

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**Q12** Respondent skipped this question

Please characterized the prior state of the farmland that is or might be leased to the solar developer: (Please check all that apply)

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**Q13** Respondent skipped this question

Have you been in touch with a solar developer to host solar panels that will generate electricity for off-farm use?

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**Q14** Respondent skipped this question

Under what conditions would you be willing to host solar panels on your farmland that will generate electricity for off-farm use: (Please check all that apply)

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**Q15**

Respondent skipped this question

Have you considered permanently protecting your farmland?

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**Q16**

How many solar projects are being proposed on farmland in your county or municipality that are going through local permitting review at the following scales?

Projects generating 5-10MW (~35 to 70 acres) **3**

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**Q17**

How many solar projects are being proposed on farmland in your county or municipality that are going through the state's 94-c or Article X permitting processes?

1

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**Q18**

To the best of your ability, please quantify the approximate percentage of farmland acres proposed to host solar projects in your county or municipality out of the total amount of available farmland:

35

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**Q19**

Mostly Negative Impact

Given the current level of interest from solar developers to site projects on farmland in your county or municipality, what impact do you think this land use change will have on the continued economic viability of farming in your community?

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**Q20**

Please explain what positive or negative impacts you anticipate.

We've had one farm seek protection from NYS to keep their land agricultural. We have a large population of Amish who rely on smaller parcels of land. Should the 2000 acre solar project come in, the Amish community has committed to leaving, which will impact our economy. We have a few large farmers who do wish to rent land because they feel they can't sustain dairy alone. So it's a mixed bag.

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**Q21**

How would your county or municipality prefer developers mitigate any potential negative impact that siting solar to generate electricity for off farm use may have on farmland availability or the economic viability of farming in your community? (Please check all that apply)

**Developer pays a mitigation fee per-acre based on the quality of the farmland impacted to be used by a qualified entity to protect farmland in the community**

**Developer pays a mitigation fee per-acre based on the quality of the farmland impacted to be used to invest in the continued economic viability of farming in the community**

**Developer must ensure project allows for continued farming activities under and around solar panels**

**Developer must construct, operate, and decommission the project in a way that preserves the ability of the land to be farmed in the future**

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**Q22**

Based on local priorities and/or official documents (eg. farmland protection plan), please choose whether your county or municipality would like solar developers to always, sometimes, or never be allowed to site solar panels on the following farmland types:

Most productive, or prime, farmland	<b>Never</b>
Farmland with limitations (limits the types of crops that can be grown)	<b>Never</b>
Marginal Cultivated Land	<b>Sometimes</b>
Land not suitable for pasture or cultivated use	<b>Sometimes</b>
Actively Farmed Land, regardless of soil type	<b>Never</b>
Underutilized Farmland, regardless of soil type	<b>Sometimes</b>
All Farmland	<b>Sometimes</b>
Forested land on farms	<b>Sometimes</b>

**Q23**

Please explain your responses.

We are a community where 75% of our land is Ag land, so it would be impossible to say NEVER to everything. There are times where it may be appropriate. But we want smart and thoughtful siting that benefits the community. We are concerned that 94-C siting does not allow us a voice in the process. The solar companies appear to be interested in ease of siting vs concerns about food / ag production and how it conflicts with using open land rather than using roof tops, brownsfields, and other less desirable spaces to site solar. The 94-c process conflicts with our Comprehensive Plan and our Town Goals.

**Q24**

Based on local environmental priorities and/or official documents (eg. comprehensive plans), please choose whether you think solar developers should always, sometimes, or never be allowed to site solar panels to generate electricity to inject into the grid on land with the following environmental attributes:

Wetlands	<b>Never</b>
100-year Floodplains	<b>Never</b>
Coastal Flood Zones	<b>Never</b>
Forested areas	<b>Sometimes</b>
Riparian Buffers	<b>I'm not sure</b>
Wildlife Connecting Corridors	<b>Never</b>
Sensitive Wildlife Habitats (eg. important bird areas)	<b>Never</b>
High Biodiversity Areas	<b>I'm not sure</b>

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**Q25**

Please explain your responses.

Town goal of Preserving Natural environment is to protect wetlands, steep slopes, aquifers, stream corridors, etc. We also have goals to curtail construction in 100 year flood plains. There is concern about rerouting wildlife and what that will do for increased accidents and increased crop damage.

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**Q26**

What further considerations should be taken into account (environmental justice, economic, cultural, social) when considering siting on farmland or when making policy recommendations for siting solar on farmland? Please be as specific as possible.

We wish to promote land use that compliments and enhances the Town's existing development patterns, while preserving the Town's rural and historic character & natural resources. We run into archeological finds regularly and this is of concern. We wish to preserve our farming community, while recognizing that renewable energy has it's place and can benefit a community if it's at the community level. Our comprehensive plan states as one of it's purposes is to preserve the rural character of the Town and encourage agriculture while permitting small scale commercial and industrial uses that are compatible with their neighbors. 94-c siting is in direct conflict with this goal. Our Amish community helps to bring in needed tax dollars without utilizing our schools, churches, and utilities. Removing them from the Town of Glen will have financial and cultural impacts. There are concerns about property value impacts. In several instances, the proposed projects will surround homes, lowering their value. We have community members trying to decide if they should sell their homes and move now before they are stuck. This too is of concern to us.

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**Q27**

**Respondent skipped this question**

How would your county or municipality prefer developers mitigate any potential negative impact that siting solar to generate electricity for off farm use may have on farmland availability or the economic viability of farming in your community? (Please check all that apply)

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**Q28**

My county or municipality protects farmland and/or promotes farm viability in the following ways: (Please check all that apply)

**Has a right to farm law,**

**Allows rural enterprises compatible with agriculture in farm areas**

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**Has a detailed section on agriculture in our comprehensive plan**

,

**Implements this plan through zoning, ordinances, or other processes**

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**Encourages the use of Agricultural Tax Assessment,**

**Does Site Plan Review for Proposed Development on Farmland**

,

**Incorporates Agricultural Districts**

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**Q29**

Does your town, or do municipalities within your county, have local land use laws or processes that guide the permitting of solar projects on farmland in a way that also promotes farmland protection?

**No**

**Q30**

Which of the following elements are included in these land use laws to balance renewable development and farmland protection? (If you do not currently have laws governing siting, please indicate which elements your municipality might like to include)

**Protection of some soil types (eg. prime farmland) from solar development**

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**Protection of land in active agriculture from solar development**

,

**Encourage development of Dual Use projects (farming and solar energy generation on the same parcel)**

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**Requirement to mitigate impacts to farmland through farmland protection**

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**Requirement to follow NYSAGM guidelines for construction, operation, and decommissioning of solar projects**

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**Our Solar Land Use Laws don't consider farmland protection**

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Other (please specify):

We do not have protections today but I have checked off the first 5 as the Planning Board is encouraging the Town Board to update our law to include these protections.

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**Q31**

Did your town use any county or regional planning resources (eg. Guidance from county planning, Tug Hill Commission white paper) in developing this solar land use policy? If so, please share this resource:

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q32**

Does your county provide any technical assistance to help municipalities within the county balance renewable energy development with farmland protection efforts? If so, please share these resources:

**Respondent skipped this question**

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**Q33**

What other issues come up in your local community around siting solar on farmland? (eg. Visual impacts, noise)

Visual impacts, property values, disruption of wildlife, concerns about economic impact. We are 75% Ag land and 35% of it is being looked at for siting right now. Citizens are concerned about this as well.

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**Q34**

Please provide any further comments or opinions on how best to site solar installations on New York farmland:

We believe it's best to keep the siting of solar at the Town level. This allows a community to determine where it is best to site. Right now 40% of land sited is agricultural. According to Cornell University, 84% of what is intended to be sited is agricultural. Having to choose to feed our people / animals or have renewable energy is an impossible spot to be in. The either/or isn't viable. We need solutions that compromise on this endeavor. We cannot do this when the State's 94-c process violates the State's constitution and overrides a communities ability to govern itself and determine what works best within it's boundaries.

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**Q35**

What resources can American Farmland Trust provide that will help inform better decision making, local laws, planning, and/or permitting that will balance renewable energy development with farmland protection in your municipality?

Our current guidance has come from NYSERDA and does not include farmland siting as part of it's solar law template. Any resources to assist with updating local laws to meld Ag with solar would be beneficial. Also, any resources to help fight against the State's unconstitutional 94-c process would be helpful. Having spoken to town's across the state, individually they are struggling to stand up for themselves, but if there was a collective group to push back, we would have a better chance of reasonable results.

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**Q36**

American Farmland Trust plans to host two regional roundtables in late October/early November of 2021 to further inform the Traffic Light Project. If you would be willing to join one of these roundtable sessions to provide more opinions and feedback on the topics in this survey, please provide your name and contact information below.

Name: **Sandra Hemstreet**  
Email: **sandrahemstreet@gmail.com**

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