

1 STATE OF CONNECTICUT
2 CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

3
4 Petition No. 1104

5 Petition From the United Illuminating Company
6 for a Declaratory Ruling that no Certificate
7 of Environmental Compatibility and Public
8 Need is Required for the Proposed
9 Construction, Maintenance and Operation for
10 of a 2.2 Megawatt Solar Photovoltaic Facility
11 and a 2.8 Megawatt Fuel Cell Facility on
12 Approximately 22 Acres of the Former Seaside
13 Landfill located at 530 Waldemere Avenue,
14 Bridgeport, Connecticut

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16 Public Hearing held at the Bridgeport
17 City Hall, Council Chambers, 45 Lyon Terrace,
18 Bridgeport, Connecticut, September 11, 2014,
19 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

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21 H e l d B e f o r e:

22 ROBERT STEIN, Chairman
23
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1 A p p e a r a n c e s :

2 Council Members:

3 JAMES J. MURPHY, JR.,

4 Vice Chairperson

5 PHILIP T. ASHTON

6 DR. MICHAEL W. KLEMENS

7 ROBERT HANNON

8 EILEEN M. DAILY

9 DR. BARBARA C. BELL

10

11 Council Staff:

12 MELANIE BACHMAN, ESQ.,

13 Executive Director and

14 Staff Attorney

15 ROBERT MERCIER

16 Siting Analyst

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon,
2 ladies and gentlemen. I like to call to
3 order this meeting of the Connecticut Siting
4 Council, today Tuesday, September 11, 2014,
5 approximately 7 p.m.

6 My name is Robert Stein,
7 Chairman of the Connecticut Siting Council.
8 Other members of the Council present are the
9 Vice Chairman, Senator Murphy; Mr. Hannon,
10 who's designee from the Department of Energy,
11 Environmental Protection; Mr. Ashton;
12 Dr. Bell; Dr. Klemens and Senator Daily.
13 Members of the staff present are Attorney
14 Bachman our Executive Director, and Robert
15 Mercier, our siting analyst.

16 This is a continuation of a
17 public hearing that began at 3 p.m. this
18 afternoon. Copies of the hearing program and
19 the Council Citizen Guide to Siting Council
20 Procedures are available for members of the
21 public. This hearing is held pursuant to
22 provisions of Title 16 of the Connecticut
23 General Statutes and of the Uniform
24 Administrative Procedure Act upon a petition
25 from UI for a Declaratory Ruling that no

1 Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
2 and Public Need is Required for the Proposed
3 Construction, Maintenance and Operation of a
4 2.2 Megawatt Solar Photovoltaic Facility and
5 a 2.6 Megawatt Fuel-Cell Facility on
6 Approximately 22 Acres of the Former Seaside
7 Landfill, Located at 350 Waldemere Avenue, in
8 Bridgeport, Connecticut.

9 This petition was received by
10 the Council on May 27, 2014. The Council's
11 legal notice of the date and time of the
12 hearing was published in the Connecticut Post
13 on July 15, 2014. Upon this Council's
14 request the petitioner erected signs at three
15 different locations within Seaside Park so as
16 to inform the public of the name of the
17 Petitioner, the type of facility proposed,
18 the hearing date and location and contact
19 information for the Council.

20 At 2 p.m. this afternoon
21 members of the Council, staff and public
22 personally conducted a field review of the
23 proposed facility site in order to observe
24 firsthand potential effects of the proposal.
25 This hearing tonight has been reserved first

1 for the public to make short statements into
2 the record. These public statements are not
3 subject to questions from the parties or
4 Council, and members of the public making
5 statements may not ask questions of parties
6 or Council. Statements will become part of
7 the record for Council consideration.

8 A sign-up sheet is available
9 for those who would like to participate, many
10 of you already have. As a reminder to all,
11 off-the-record communication with a member of
12 the Council or a member of the Council staff
13 upon the merits of the petition is prohibited
14 by law.

15 I wish to note that parties
16 and intervenors including their
17 representatives and witnesses are not allowed
18 to participate in the public comment session.
19 I also wish to note for those who are here
20 and for the benefit of your friends and
21 neighbors who are unable to join us for the
22 public comment session, that you or they may
23 send written statements to the Council within
24 30 days of the date hereof, and such written
25 statements will be given the same weight as

1 if spoken at the hearing.

2 We ask each person making a
3 public statement in this proceeding to
4 confine his or her statements to the subject
5 matter before the Council, and to avoid
6 unreasonable and unnecessary repetition so
7 that we may will hear all the concerns you
8 and your neighbors have.

9 Again, please be advised the
10 Council cannot answer questions from the
11 public about the proposal.

12 Since we have a significant
13 number of people who have signed up, and in
14 fairness to everyone who wishes to speak, I'd
15 like to limit oral statements to three
16 minutes. Obviously, if you have something in
17 writing you can also hand it in and it will
18 become part of the record.

19 Don't like to use it, but we
20 do have a stoplight mechanism which will be
21 green for approximately two and half minutes,
22 and then will turn yellow and then red when
23 time has expired.

24 A verbatim transcript will be
25 made of the hearing and deposited at the

1 Bridgeport City Clerk's office for the
2 convenience of the public.

3 Before calling on the public,
4 I'd like to ask the petitioner to make a
5 brief presentation.

6 ANTHONY MARONE: Good evening,
7 members of the Siting Council and the public.
8 Thank you for allowing me to make a brief
9 presentation or a brief summary of the
10 project before you. My name is Tony Marone.
11 I'm a senior vice president of customer and
12 business services for UIL Holdings, a parent
13 company of United Illuminating, the Applicant
14 before you on this project.

15 I know there's been a lot of
16 information put into the record before us, so
17 I'm just going to summarize very briefly what
18 the project is. This project emanated out of
19 legislation, Connecticut legislation. It's
20 going back to 2011. That legislation allowed
21 the electric distribution companies an
22 opportunity to build, own and operate
23 renewable generation up to 10 megawatts per
24 electric distribution company.

25 And on behalf of UI, we have

1 brought forth this project which we believe
2 is a great fit aligned with the intent of
3 that legislation and the Governor's vision
4 for cleaner, cheaper more reliable energy and
5 renewable energy.

6 The project will consist
7 of 5 megawatts out of the 10 megawatt total
8 allowed that we have under this specific
9 legislation, located here in Bridgeport. And
10 the project consists of 2.2 megawatts of PV
11 panels on the now vacant landfill site. And
12 adjacent to that site or down at the bottom
13 of the landfill is a 2.8-megawatt fuel cell.

14 Just to give a perspective of
15 the size of this, for those who are not in
16 the energy industry, 5 megawatts total is
17 about -- this facility will put out about
18 enough energy that would power anywhere from
19 four to 5,000 homes in a year. It's about
20 that much energy.

21 Just on a comparative basis,
22 Bridgeport Harbor Station, right down the
23 street, Bridgeport Harbor Station Unit 3,
24 where I used to work and started my career in
25 Bridgeport a long time ago, the red and white

1 stack, just Unit 3 is just under 400
2 megawatts, just to give a relative size of
3 the size of this facility compared to some of
4 the larger power plants. But no less it is a
5 very -- an invaluable part of bringing this
6 State forward with respect to renewable
7 energy.

8 We have some boards in the
9 back of the room. They're available to take
10 a look at the layout of the site and the area
11 regarding the PV system and that occupies
12 about 11.4 acres out of the 22 acres on the
13 site. It's a ballast-mounted system.
14 Because the landfill is capped, we need to be
15 very careful in our approach that we do not
16 disturb the cap in any way. So everything
17 that we do up on the landfill must be in a
18 manner that does not compromise the cap at
19 all.

20 So the fencing, all of the
21 systems are layed in a ballasted, basically
22 on cement pedestals that will ensure that we
23 don't jeopardize the integrity of the cap at
24 all.

25 Similarly, the fuel cell,

1 which is located in the lower section on
2 approximately .4 acres of property, the fuel
3 cell will be raised up from its current
4 level, raised up approximately about four
5 feet from what it currently is right now.
6 And that is to put the elevation of the
7 lowest part of the equipment there at one
8 foot above FEMA's current recommendations for
9 building in the floodplain areas.

10 So we believe that the project
11 has gone through a lot of detail design and
12 engineering, and we think it's a great
13 project and a great fit for the city and for
14 all of UI's customers.

15 And speaking of that, the way
16 that this works, the way this legislation
17 works is that all UI customers are paying for
18 the support of the costs of this project and
19 in return all of the output, all the energy
20 output of the project flows back, the value
21 of that flows back to all UI customers.

22 So where the actual electrons
23 flow is probably right down at Bridgeport,
24 but from a practical purpose this is
25 supported by all UI ratepayers and all the

1 value flows back to UI ratepayers.

2 This will be interconnected
3 from the site down to our Pequonnock
4 substation and that's how it will get out
5 into the -- into the marketplace, basically.

6 So a brief overview of the
7 project. If there's any additional questions
8 before I turn it over to the public. I know
9 there's a lot of speakers and I don't want to
10 take up their time.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
12 much.

13 ANTHONY MARONE: Thank you.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I'm
15 going to start calling people according to
16 the list. A couple of you, for some reason
17 have signed up more than once, but you'll
18 only get one crack at it. And I apologize in
19 advance if I mispronounce your name, but
20 please when I do, when you do come up spell
21 your last name for the stenographer.

22 Thank you.

23 Tom McCartney. I guess I
24 either mispronounced that so badly, or he's
25 not here.

1 A VOICE: He's not here.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Ezekiel

3 Santiago.

4 Jack Banta.

5 JACK BANTA: Thank you,
6 Committee. I'm Jack Banta. I'm a
7 Representative of 131st District where the
8 solar array will be located.

9 I stand before you this
10 evening in total support of this. I think
11 this is a very good idea. As our city is
12 changing, as our country is changing, we need
13 to change along with it. This is an
14 opportunity for the City of Bridgeport to be
15 a leader in the way of how we do things now,
16 because when we used to be an old industrial
17 city, now that we're turning the corner and
18 now that we are, you know, going to -- I'm
19 getting nervous so, please, excuse me
20 there -- but we are about ready to get into
21 the 21st century now, and we need to change
22 along with the times.

23 Thank you.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
25 much.

1 Denise Taylor Moye.

2 DENISE TAYLOR MOYE: My name
3 is Denise Taylor-Moye, my last name is
4 spelled M-o-y-e, and I am City Councilwoman
5 for 131st District. This is where the solar
6 panel is being placed. I am here. I am in
7 total support of it. It's just a couple of
8 things that I do want to say.

9 We, as people, know that
10 things are changing, changing rapidly in our
11 country, in our world. And today what we
12 have is this clean, new B-Green piece that's
13 going on here in Bridgeport. And we need to
14 be supportive of this for our children, the
15 children like this young man here. He wants
16 to breathe fresh air, clean air even when he
17 comes to the city to the visit or if he's
18 here in the city living, this is what our
19 children should have. Not only them, us
20 adults. We should have clean fresh air also
21 to breathe.

22 So I think this project is a
23 very good piece to take place here in the
24 City of Bridgeport on some property that has
25 been laying there for years with nothing for

1 decades, with nothing going on there. And to
2 have something there now that would be
3 beneficial to many people, not just some but
4 to many people, it's something that I think
5 is well needed in the city of Bridgeport.

6 And my little friend here, I
7 don't know, he might want to say a couple of
8 words.

9 He said, No thanks.

10 Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thank
12 you. We appreciate you getting up anyway.

13 E. David Niesyn.

14 E. DAVID NIESYN: Yes, sir.

15 Hi. My name is E. David
16 Niesyn. I live at 298 Prospect Street.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: You want to
18 spell your last name, please?

19 E. DAVID NIESYN: N-i-e-s-y-n,
20 and I've lived in Bridgeport for about 30
21 years. I really love Seaside Park. The one
22 thing about Seaside Park is that it is
23 incredibly open space. It's beautiful. The
24 area that was used as a dump was used as a
25 dump, and it was illegally used as a dump.

1 Now nature has reclaimed it.

2 At one time, the Parks
3 Commission had a hearing regarding the use of
4 this space for solar panels. The Parks
5 Commission after the hearing unanimously
6 decided that no commercial venture would be
7 used in the park.

8 The Mayor didn't like that and
9 said that was not a binding vote because it's
10 a do-over, and he gets what he wants usually.
11 The one thing about Bridgeport, no matter
12 what side of this idea you're a part of, it
13 is that you're represented by bad
14 government -- bad government.

15 I'm opposed to it because
16 there's other places in Bridgeport that this
17 can be built. Taking this area that is now a
18 nature preserve, pretty much, an open space
19 where you can view the openness is something
20 that I enjoy a lot. I listened to the UI
21 spokesman today, you know, answering your
22 questions. I think of a lot of what they're
23 saying, they're just, you know, answering
24 your questions off the cuff.

25 I mean, unless things are put

1 in writing, I do not believe that some of the
2 things they are saying are true. I believe
3 that in a heavy wind you're going to be
4 hearing noise from the fuel-cell plant that
5 they said was like a 72-decibel sound rating.
6 You know, noise carries with wind, sound
7 carries with wind.

8 I just am -- I don't want to
9 be vilified as being, you know, anti-solar,
10 nonpolluting technology. I just don't want
11 the stuff built in our park. You know I
12 mean, there's brownfields everywhere in the
13 City of Bridgeport, areas that are not in the
14 park. And pretty much those are areas that
15 should be considered.

16 Now the Mayor and the Common
17 Council, they all think this is a great place
18 to build it because they have told us before
19 we even came to any of this, these meetings,
20 that this, don't fight this. This is a done
21 deal. I don't believe it's a done deal, and
22 I don't want our park to have any commercial
23 ventures in it, you know, no matter what.

24 And pretty much that's all I
25 have to say, but I don't want to be vilified

1 as being anti-solar power or anti-wind power,
2 but I just don't want any commercial venture
3 in our park, and that's all I have to say
4 pretty much.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
6 much.

7 And the purpose of the hearing
8 is not to vilify anybody. It's to hear from
9 everybody.

10 James Cloud.

11 JAMES S. CLOUD: Good evening.
12 Most of my life -- I'm a little over 50 years
13 old. I would have considered myself a
14 naturalist, an environmentalist.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you spell
16 your last name, please.

17 JAMES S. CLOUD: Cloud, James
18 S. Cloud, C-l-o-u-d.

19 Much of my life I would have
20 considered myself an environmentalist and a
21 naturalist. I've spoken on behalf of clean
22 energy at Windham, Colebrook, where they're
23 looking to put in wind generating stations.

24 I must say, going back 15, 16
25 years ago while standing on Seaside Park

1 looking up at the hill above me, I looked at
2 that and I said, this really should have wind
3 generation. This should have solar
4 generation. We need clean power here.

5 Since then, I've spoken out on
6 behalf throughout the state. I've addressed
7 the Siting Council in other towns, but it's
8 always the same story. Not in my backyard.
9 Not in my backyard. Well, Seaside Park is my
10 backyard, so when I spoke in other towns I've
11 had to explain to myself why, I need it in
12 your backyard. We all need it in our
13 backyards. Whether it's wind, solar,
14 whatever. We need to move to clean energy.

15 When I was young boy, and they
16 started talking about OPEC and the oil
17 embargoes and the gas lines, we weren't even
18 talking about global heating then. We were
19 talking about being captured, or prisoners to
20 countries that have the fuels. We needed to
21 conserve energy. We didn't do a whole hell
22 of a lot. I was a young boy in second grade.
23 Now I'm an old man getting long in the tooth.
24 And we haven't done much.

25 We talked about changing over

1 to the metric system, yet, I'm still helping
2 my daughters do the conversions. We've come
3 no farther than when I was a schoolboy in
4 sixth grade. We need to stop this. We need
5 to make a change.

6 I would like Bridgeport to be
7 a leader and step up to the plate and say,
8 we'll have it in our backyard. As it is
9 right now in my backyard I've got it, right
10 there by Black Rock, we have the trash
11 burner. We have the noise of Sikorsky. We
12 have the noise of I-95. We have a
13 coal-burning power plant to the east of me.
14 I live right at the bottom of Park Avenue. I
15 go to Seaside Park 365 days a year. I hike.
16 Although, I live near the east end of Seaside
17 Park I spend most of my time down in the west
18 end. Section 5 of that beach is -- I'm there
19 almost every day in the hot weather. But in
20 the cold weather also I hike with my dog. I
21 walk with my kids. I study the praying
22 mantises. I observe the ospreys. I see the
23 deer. I had to put a fence around my yard
24 and my garden to keep the deer out. I'm a
25 naturalist. I'm an organic gardener. I grow

1 the best darn tomatoes in New England. I
2 also keep bees right there. I have beehives
3 right there outside the Perry Arch. I do
4 live by the standards. I burn carbon-neutral
5 fuel of wood to heat my old Victorian home in
6 two wood-burning stoves that I cut and split
7 myself. I try to leave as small an imprint
8 on the environment as I can.

9 I ask you for the future of my
10 children can we do something. So here I am.
11 There will environmentalists up here saying,
12 don't do this. I want to tell you, UI, I'm
13 an environmentalist. I love this world. I
14 want to see clean energy and I'm asking you
15 to help put it here in Bridgeport. I also
16 ask, that, I believe is a good location for
17 some wind generation.

18 And please, the animals, there
19 is plenty of room around Seaside Park. For
20 years nobody has taken advantage or hiked
21 those trails. Anybody who has, would know
22 when you walk away you're covered with ticks.
23 You're covered with all kinds of thorns, but
24 that's what we do when we go walking in the
25 woods, but few will do that.

1 When I tell you, Siting
2 Council, it is my backyard. I live here and
3 I'm thinking of the future, and I want
4 Bridgeport to lead the way.

5 Please allow us to go into the
6 future.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
8 much.

9 Christopher Anastasi.

10 CHRISTOPHER M. ANASTASI: Good
11 evening. My name is Christopher Anastasi,
12 A-n-a-s-t-a-s-i.

13 In the interests of full
14 disclosure I am the sustainability
15 coordinator for the City of Bridgeport. I am
16 also a lifelong resident of the city of
17 Bridgeport, and it is solely and in my
18 personal individual capacity that I am
19 speaking before you this evening.

20 I hold a Master's in public
21 administration degree from the University of
22 Pennsylvania, and I am quite familiar from my
23 university studies with the ongoing national
24 evolution towards alternative green energy
25 generation and consumption.

1 The UI project to construct,
2 maintain and operate a 2.1 megawatt AC solar
3 photovoltaic facility and a 2.8 megawatt AC
4 fuel-cell facility on the Seaside Landfill in
5 Bridgeport, Connecticut, is a commonsense
6 proposal. This project will further the
7 public policy goals of expanding sustainable
8 clean, green energy production in lieu of
9 traditional reliance on fossil fuel energy
10 sources.

11 The proposed UI solar and
12 fuel-cell project will be a major positive
13 for us, the residents of Bridgeport. It will
14 provide a substantial amount of much needed
15 alternative energy to the most populous city
16 in Connecticut. It will provide a clean
17 energy source to an urban region where
18 air-pollution induced asthma is a health
19 concern.

20 Finally, as a trend-setting
21 project it will inspire other former
22 industrial cities to similarly convert sooner
23 rather than later to clean sustainable green
24 production. The practical and inspirational
25 value of the proposed project was recognized

1 by our local governing bodies. It is a
2 public -- information that both the
3 Bridgeport Parks Commission and Bridgeport
4 City Council after public hearings voted
5 overwhelmingly to authorize this project.

6 This project will be a prime
7 example of a major utility transitioning from
8 burning fossil fuels to producing a clean
9 energy while reducing a closed landfill to
10 improve the environment.

11 My city's vision for a
12 sustainable future with clean and green
13 energy production is realized by this project
14 which places us at the forefront of the
15 alternative energy revolution. This
16 innovative project is a huge win for my city
17 and makes me immensely proud to be a
18 Bridgeporter.

19 Thank you for the opportunity
20 to be heard on this matter, and I am filing
21 written copies of my statement.

22 Thank you.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
24 much.

25 Paul Timpanelli.

1 PAUL TIMPANELLI: Thank you
2 Mr. Chairman, members of the Siting Council.
3 My name is Paul Timpanelli. It's spelled T-
4 as in Thomas, -i-m as in mother, -p as in
5 Peter, -a-n-e-l-l-i.

6 I'm the President and CEO of
7 the Bridgeport Regional Business Council.
8 The Business Council is a business membership
9 association representing about a thousand
10 businesses in the Greater Bridgeport Region,
11 500 of which or so are located here in the
12 City of Bridgeport, and I'm here speaking on
13 behalf of that membership, as well as our
14 board of directors which is made up of 50
15 corporate leaders in our community, all of
16 whom have voted unanimously to support this
17 project.

18 The Business Council has
19 worked in concert and in partnership with the
20 City of Bridgeport over the last five years
21 or so in development of a concept to create
22 our so-called echo-technology park on the
23 west end of the city in which this proposed
24 renewable energy development lies. This is a
25 critical ingredient of our vision for the

1 overall development of that park.

2 In the last year or so, we
3 have received a small grant from the State of
4 Connecticut Department of Economic and
5 Community Development to enable us to
6 formalize the creation of a municipal
7 development plan which is inclusive of
8 renewable energy projects within the zone to
9 be identified and that plan, hopefully, is
10 ready for submittal to the City Council
11 in 2015.

12 The eco-technology park will
13 likely be a national model that has already
14 gained recognition of local, statewide, and
15 national political leaders, elected
16 officials, including -- included, and is on
17 the cutting edge of making for a cleaner
18 environment, while at the same time, growing
19 an urban economy.

20 In addition, it has already
21 been testified to you this evening and is
22 worth repeating, this project will enable
23 Bridgeport's city children to breathe cleaner
24 air, in a city which has three times the
25 national average of an asthma rate, and it

1 will help to revitalize a blighted
2 neighborhood on the west side of the city
3 around an industrial arena that currently has
4 eight new businesses in which we have
5 partnered with the City in relocating to this
6 park over the last year or so.

7 What is now the largest
8 fuel-cell installation facility in the
9 Western hemisphere is one of those new
10 businesses that we have successfully
11 relocated to our new eco-technology park. We
12 have located seven other businesses that have
13 accounted for the creation of 140 new jobs.
14 And this is just within the identified
15 boundaries of the park that we are about to
16 formalize.

17 This has also resulted in new
18 investment into the neighborhood. As an
19 example, we now have three former blighted
20 industrial buildings that are adjacent to
21 I-95 that have been bought by an investor out
22 of White Plains, New York and is going to
23 convert those buildings into 300 units of
24 housing. These were three building which
25 have been vacated and abandoned and blighted

1 for the last 15 or 20 years.

2 This investment has directly
3 resulted as a result of our proposed
4 eco-technology park on the west end in which
5 this renewable energy park is located, and
6 bears repeating. This is a success story in
7 the making. It is clearly an example of the
8 if-you-build-it-they-will-come vision.

9 We are building an
10 eco-technology park on the west end of the
11 city. This renewable energy park is a
12 critical ingredient of that eco-technology
13 park, and it's clearly the kind of process
14 and the kind of development that will put
15 Bridgeport into the 21st Century.

16 It has already been testified
17 to you that we were formerly located as an
18 industrial manufacturing mecca. In the
19 future we will be located as a green city
20 that will bring new jobs, new investment, and
21 new opportunity for the city's residents.

22 I have copies of my submitted
23 testimony and I will submit that to you.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very

1 much.

2 Jeff Bishop.

3 JEFF BISHOP: My name is Jeff
4 Bishop, B-i-s-h-o-p.

5 I want to thank you for the
6 opportunity to present my thoughts to this
7 esteemed Council this evening. As I
8 mentioned, my name is Jeff Bishop and I'm
9 with the Center for Sustainable Business
10 Growth here in Bridgeport. We are a
11 public-private partnership between the
12 business community in this area and the City
13 of Bridgeport. It is also a program of the
14 Bridgeport Regional Business Council.

15 One of my functions is to
16 provide business recruitment and business
17 retention services here in the Greater
18 Bridgeport area. The eco-technology park has
19 served as the centerpiece of our economic
20 development efforts here on the west side of
21 Bridgeport within the last few years, and the
22 green energy park is an integral part of this
23 important and ambitious initiative.

24 The eco-technology park has
25 generated a tremendous amount of interest,

1 not only nationally, but internationally as
2 well. We have hosted groups and delegations
3 from Hong Kong, Japan and Germany that were
4 all interested in touring our park and to
5 learn about the synergies and opportunities
6 that exist, particularly in an older urban
7 setting.

8 Of particular interest was the
9 innovative reuse of the former landfill that
10 produces clean renewable energy. In addition
11 to the foreign interest, there have been
12 numerous groups here within United States
13 that have toured and expressed interest in
14 our efforts here in Bridgeport. We believe
15 that this will serve as a model to cities
16 throughout the United States to emulate.

17 Because of this forward
18 thinking and the investment being made here
19 in Bridgeport to make it a cleaner and
20 greener city, we are attracting businesses
21 into the Bridgeport area that we believe will
22 benefit from these efforts. Not only are
23 these companies investing in the local
24 economy here in Bridgeport, but they are
25 creating good paying jobs and creating a

1 skilled workforce at the same time.

2 I am sure you will hear from
3 others about the facts and figures as it
4 relates to the economic impacts, the
5 environmental benefits and all the advantages
6 that clean energy generation provide, however
7 one of the things I most impressed with is
8 what this project does for the perception and
9 reputation of the City of Bridgeport on the
10 national and world stage.

11 Bridgeport has a long and rich
12 tradition in being the seed of innovation and
13 being first in the introduction of new
14 technology. I believe that this project will
15 continue in that tradition. Additionally,
16 this is a project that helps make my job
17 which easier to attract businesses and create
18 higher and better paying jobs.

19 Thank you very much.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 Bill Malone.

22 BILL MALONE: Good evening.

23 My name is Bill Malone. I'm president of
24 Enviro Express. In 1999 our company closed
25 and capped the Bridgeport Landfill. And we

1 believe today that the best use for that
2 landfill will be the solar project. And
3 we're located about a half a mile from the
4 landfill and it's a very suitable location to
5 do this. And we believe that we need more
6 energy, more clean energy in Bridgeport and
7 we look forward to seeing this project
8 happen.

9 Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

11 Brent Baker.

12 Adrienne Houel.

13 ADRIENNE FARRAR HOUEL: Good
14 evening. My name is Adrienne Farrar Houel.
15 I'm a resident here in Bridgeport and I'm
16 also the President and CEO of a recycling
17 company that is in the eco industrial park.
18 We're a nonprofit corporation and we are
19 particularly interested in the creation of
20 jobs in the area of green industry.

21 So dear members of the
22 Connecticut Siting Council, I live in
23 Bridgeport and I'm fortunate to have deep
24 multigenerational roots here. My
25 great-grandparents and grandparents belonged

1 to generations that made their livelihoods in
2 the context of the city's great industrial
3 past. They were able to purchase homes,
4 provide for their families and send their
5 children to college. For the past four
6 decades, however, the city has suffered
7 flight of industry, business and population,
8 leaving the most recent residents with a job
9 of searching a new path to prosperity and
10 well being for Bridgeport families and
11 neighborhoods.

12 Since 2008 Mayor Finch and his
13 administration, with the help of the
14 Bridgeport Regional Business Community has
15 focused on bringing the city forward through
16 economic development and its residents to
17 better health and well being through
18 environmental sustainability. Over the last
19 couple of years, Bridgeport has become known
20 in the state and nationally as a place where
21 people understand the need for public and
22 private investment in sustainable projects
23 and programs, and where public policy
24 encourages that investment.

25 People with ideas, money and

1 knowhow are knocking on our doors to see how
2 they can participate in green opportunities
3 here. The creation of our green energy park,
4 a cornerstone of our sustainability program,
5 is an integral part of developments planned
6 through the be B-Green 2020 initiative. Many
7 of us took part in developing this document
8 that identifies programs and projects
9 designed to reduce our carbon footprint by 20
10 percent by the year 2020.

11 Why did we, and still do,
12 consider this an important objective?
13 Because at the time, and in the language that
14 sounds a bit outdated now, we were concerned
15 about cooking the planet, about global
16 warming, that hole in the ozone layer that
17 would grow, and in terms we still do use
18 about climate change.

19 The 9,000 solar panels and the
20 fuel cell that will be installed on our old
21 closed landfill will help Bridgeport and the
22 region fulfill the objectives we set out back
23 in 2010. And the project with further cement
24 our City's position as a forward-looking and
25 forward-thinking place where people will

1 support new technology with a can-do
2 attitude, like our industrial forefathers
3 did, but with this time with great attention
4 to the impact these new technologies have on
5 our communities.

6 I wholeheartedly support and
7 advocate for this project because, first,
8 it's a critical component in the economic
9 development of our city, it will create 92
10 jobs by UI's estimate, many of which can be
11 filled by our local residents and it signals
12 our willingness to make possible cutting-edge
13 projects that positively impact our city's
14 environment.

15 It will help reduce carbon
16 emissions in the production of electricity
17 and help our City and State reach their goals
18 in this regard. The project will turn an
19 unused old dumpsite into a valuable
20 productive green energy park, that in
21 addition to the benefits of producing green
22 energy to power more than 5,000 Connecticut
23 homes, it will bring revenue to the City
24 through a lease to United Illuminating.

25 Benefits further include the

1 reduction of harmful emissions that are
2 asthma triggers for Bridgeport kids. Our
3 community's well-being will therefore be
4 enhanced by lower incidences of respiratory
5 ailments that are three times more common in
6 Connecticut cities than throughout the state.

7 I want to thank you, the
8 members of the Siting Council for coming to
9 Bridgeport to see for yourselves the
10 importance of this project to our city and
11 its residents. We are all fighting to ensure
12 a better future for our communities and for
13 our people. The green energy park, a key
14 component to that better future will help us
15 ensure the best outcomes for economic
16 sustainability and resiliency in the face of
17 environmental challenges and climatic change.

18 Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
20 much.

21 Monica Jackson.

22 MONICA JACKSON: Good evening.
23 My name is Monica Jackson and I am a
24 Bridgeport resident.

25 Dear members of the

1 Connecticut Siting Council, my business
2 commitments I'm reading for -- I'm sorry, but
3 I'm reading for my boss, Glenn Lockhart who
4 cannot make it tonight.

5 Dear members of the
6 Connecticut Siting Council, my business
7 commitments do not allow me to testify in
8 person, so I have asked one of my colleagues,
9 Monica Jackson, to read my testimony into the
10 record with your permission.

11 My name is Glenn Lockhart, and
12 I am the plant manager of Wheelabrator
13 Bridgeport, a waste-to-energy facility that
14 has served the solid waste disposal needs of
15 all of Southwestern Connecticut communities
16 for more than 26 years.

17 On behalf of Wheelabrator
18 Bridgeport's organization, one of the
19 nation's leading producers of renewable
20 energy, we strongly support United
21 Illuminating's petition to build and operate
22 5 megawatts of renewed generation on the site
23 of the former Bridgeport landfill in the
24 south-end community.

25 Bridgeport has taken a

1 leadership role in becoming one of the
2 greenest cities in America. Thanks to the
3 leadership of Mayor Bill Finch and the
4 public-private partnership that the City has
5 with the Bridgeport Regional Business
6 Council, beginning with the Mayor's executive
7 order of sustainability in 2008 and
8 continuing through the development and
9 implementation of one of the most
10 comprehensive urban sustainability plans
11 B-Green 2020, Bridgeport has become a model
12 for others to follow, and as a result in
13 changing its image from a declining industry
14 city to a smart sustainable community.

15 Renewable generation is an
16 important part of Connecticut's long-term
17 energy future and closed landfills can be a
18 great location for the siting of such
19 facilities, as well, as we all know,
20 renewable generation produces little to no
21 greenhouse gas emissions or air pollution.
22 And in an urban area like Bridgeport, where
23 asthma rates are three times higher than the
24 state average, it is particularly important
25 to reduce the carbon emission if done in a

1 responsible manner. This project does that,
2 and will serve as a model for other
3 municipalities to emulate.

4 Finally, Wheelabrator
5 Bridgeport has been a neighbor of the closed
6 municipal landfill for the last 25 years. In
7 the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s the landfill
8 burned regularly, and was not a very good
9 neighbor for anyone. Today, it has little
10 value, and its permanent environmental
11 closure plan will not allow for any major
12 development.

13 But if we can be the source of
14 clean renewable power that benefits everyone,
15 provides reasonable tax revenue for the city,
16 serve as a foundational piece of an eco
17 technology park that will become a national
18 model for sustainable development and be a
19 visible example of Bridgeport's green
20 renaissance.

21 Your decision in the coming
22 weeks is important on many levels, and we, at
23 Wheelabrator, urge you to approve the UI
24 petition and allow them to proceed to
25 permitting and construction. The City and

1 its political leaderships will want it and
2 the business committee wholeheartedly support
3 it. Many of the neighbors adjacent to it
4 have spoken of favor of it and it is the
5 right thing to do. I hope you agree.

6 Most respectfully, Glenn
7 Lockhart, plant manager, Wheelabrator
8 Bridgeport.

9 Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
11 much.

12 Scott Gilmartin.

13 SCOTT GILMARTIN: Good
14 evening, Chairman Stein, and members of the
15 Siting Council. My name is Scott Gilmartin
16 and I'm the principal at NuPower Thermal,
17 LLC, and we are developing a low-temperature
18 thermal heating district to serve downtown
19 Bridgeport as well as the University of
20 Bridgeport.

21 The District will expand over
22 time throughout Bridgeport, and this
23 technology for heating and cooling utilizes
24 waste heat from existing power plants. This
25 approach is widely used in northern Europe

1 and is quickly being adopted in the U.S.

2 The benefits include lower
3 heating and cooling costs for customers, high
4 efficiency, reduction in utilization of
5 carbon fuels, and a reduction in greenhouse
6 gas emissions.

7 While NuPower supports
8 renewable energy in general, the green energy
9 park will play an important role in the
10 development of our district, specifically the
11 waste heat generated by the proposed fuel
12 cells will be captured as a heat source for
13 our heating system. This will also add
14 greatly to the overall thermal efficiency of
15 the fuel cells.

16 Our district will generate
17 significant new construction jobs as well as
18 a number of permanent jobs. The first phases
19 of the project will contribute approximately
20 40 million in economic stimulus plus have a
21 multiplier effect on the economy. We are
22 certain that the green energy park will
23 improve the air quality and quality of life
24 in the city, as well as becoming an important
25 component of our project.

1 We encourage you to respond
2 favorably to the petition.

3 Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

5 Deb Brown.

6 Ben, is it, Toby?

7 Scott Gilman.

8 I guess some people just like
9 to sign their names.

10 George Estrada.

11 Marian Jackson.

12 James Miller.

13 JAMES MILLER: Good evening,

14 Siting Commission and thank you very much to

15 allow a citizen of the City of Bridgeport to

16 give a few words. Just a little bit of

17 background, because I could just go on and on

18 about that, if you know.

19 I am a true to life scientist.

20 I'm a molecular physicist and electrical

21 engineer. I graduated from Columbia in 1982,

22 worked for IBM. I'm the guy who was on the

23 design team for the first 1 megabit memory

24 chip and I was a professor of engineering at

25 New York Institute of Technology, University

1 of Hartford and for two semesters of
2 Stanford.

3 I just want to mention one
4 other thing. I've been involved with the
5 solar energy and solar sciences for the last
6 15 years. I'm presently almost completing a
7 full design on a solar desalinator, a
8 desalinator that takes ocean water and
9 converts it to freshwater. We're going to
10 end the drought using nothing but the power
11 of the sun and that's what I want to talk
12 about tonight, the power of the sun.

13 This power of the sun is
14 something -- and I gave you all the good
15 scientific reasons I want to support this
16 project, and I'm going to hand them in as
17 testimony, but I was told I would have five
18 minutes to talk instead of three, so I guess
19 I have to do it this way.

20 I want you to look first at
21 these handouts I gave you, please, if you
22 don't mind? On the left is the tale of one
23 City of Bridgeport as it exists right now.
24 That's that dump. We could call it a
25 landfill all we want, but the pictures say

1 it's a dump. And you know what? It's on
2 Seaside Park, where it's right adjacent to
3 Seaside Park.

4 But Seaside Park is 250 acres.
5 We're talking about using a tiny fraction of
6 that, barely 10 percent that is unusable for
7 anything else. Why? Because of those
8 beautiful pristine 225 acres of Seaside Park
9 every parent that I know takes his kid and
10 they play on those ballfields. They go on b
11 beach. They walk up and down the promenade,
12 just like I do with that fellow who just
13 left, who's my nephew.

14 And do you know what I've not
15 heard in all the years that I've been here?
16 I've never heard one parent say don't you
17 dare play on those beautiful 225 acres. I
18 want you to go to the dump and play. No,
19 we're not interested in that.

20 And the reason why that land
21 is not ever going to be useful for anything
22 for a very long time to come is because there
23 is some bad stuff buried down there.

24 Bridgeport was a major industrial city for a
25 long time and there was no regulation as to

1 what was put under there. So what I'm
2 telling you is there are toxins. There's
3 carcinogens. There's gases. There's all
4 kinds of stuff that will never allow that
5 landfill to be used for anything involving
6 human habitation for a long time to come.

7 And that's why you'll see
8 dumps in Massachusetts, New Jersey,
9 Pennsylvania and, of course, New York that
10 have been closed for 50, 60, 70 years that
11 still have nothing on them because it takes a
12 long time to sequester those chemicals. So
13 you're going to hear a lot of talk from the
14 people who want to say, it can be used for
15 deer. Yeah, you know what? If a deer lives
16 on that property for very long he's going to
17 die of toxic shock syndrome.

18 Now one thing I want to point
19 out, notice the profile of the second city,
20 the one we're fighting for tonight. We want
21 this plan. The people of Bridgeport want it.
22 The businesses of Bridgeport want it. That's
23 a low profile. They're only 4 feet tall and
24 they have to be angled at about 30 degrees,
25 30 to 45 degrees to get energy from the sun.

1 And the next house close to that is about
2 600 yards away. You can't see it from there,
3 and that's why I gave you this picture, the
4 before and after, and that's the truth.

5 No one here wants to see
6 Bridgeport die. Now these good people who
7 are going to tell you their reasons, and
8 certainly not me, but it's a question of do
9 we move into the future or do we cling to
10 promises of the past to people that don't
11 mean anything anymore.

12 What we want to do is see our
13 city continue to progress, to have -- to
14 support our businesses that also want this
15 park, to put Bridgeport at the forefront of
16 the green movement to be an example to the
17 rest of New England.

18 Thanks for your time.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
20 much.

21 I've been asked to remind
22 people to make sure you speak into the mic so
23 we can all hear. The acoustics at least for
24 some of us, are challenging.

25 Larry Robinson.

1 Carl McCluster.

2 CARL McCLUSTER: Good evening.

3 My name is Carl McCluster, M-c-C-l-u-s-t-e-r.

4 I'm the Senior Pastor at Shiloh Baptist

5 Church, where I serve in my 20th year. I am

6 also the chairperson of the South End

7 Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Plane --

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you

9 please speak up or can you get the mic a

10 little closer to you.

11 CARL McCLUSTER: I'm the

12 senior pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church where

13 I've served for 20 years, and I am the

14 chairperson of the South End Neighborhood

15 Revitalization Zone Planning Committee.

16 And I raised my children at

17 Seaside Park living on Atlantic Street. I've

18 come from an NRZ meeting tonight where the

19 last question I asked everyone in attendance

20 was, is there anyone here that is opposed at

21 all to this solar array? Not a single person

22 said, No. Every single person said, Yes.

23 And we said yes, and I say yes to you tonight

24 because this project is environmentally

25 sound. It's environmentally sound. If

1 someone said, It's our park. It is our park.
2 Like I said, I raised my children there and
3 so I know it very well. And the beauty of
4 Seaside Park is not injured at all by this
5 project, while the environmental beauty and
6 utility is enhanced by this project.

7 The renewable energy is an
8 example of sound sustainability that models
9 for the region, and models for the country.
10 This project is economically sound, because
11 it reclaims the dump that lies fallow in a
12 time where land is so valuable, benefits of
13 shared cost of this piece of infrastructure,
14 development is a shared responsibility, and
15 is economically sound. The leadership that
16 draws other like-minded green developers to
17 our region with this project is also
18 economically sound because it serves as a
19 catalyst to others who want to develop in
20 this state and in this region. And the jobs
21 that pour resources into our community make
22 it economically sound.

23 So it's environmentally sound,
24 it's economically sound, but it's also
25 equitably sound. And I say that because I've

1 been constantly encouraged by others to
2 share, to share with what's going on in our
3 community, to share with everything from
4 taxes, to the community services that we all
5 render.

6 But now I ask you, the members
7 of this Siting Council to share with us, to
8 share with the hopes and dreams of a
9 community and a city that's on the rise. To
10 share the initiative and creativity of our
11 forefathers who said that we could fly, and
12 we did, and said that we would go to the
13 moon, and we did. And said that we can do
14 this, and we will.

15 That said that Bridgeport can
16 be something, and in is and shall. To share
17 the responsibility and to share our future,
18 one that is healthy and one that is sound. I
19 implore you to share the moment that we have
20 here to make a difference in this community,
21 and to make a difference in this world so
22 that our children will have what we had, a
23 generous legacy of hope and economic
24 vitality.

25 Thank you.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

2 Onte Johnson.

3 Pete Carroll.

4 Suzanne Huminski.

5 SUZANNE HUMINSKI: Good

6 evening, Councilmembers. My name is Suzanne

7 Huminski. I'm the Sustainability Coordinator

8 at Southern Connecticut State University.

9 Thank you very much.

10 My last name is spelled

11 H-u-m-i-n-s-k-i.

12 I'd like to echo many of the

13 points that were made by the speaker before

14 me. I wish I had the charisma that he has.

15 I'm here on behalf of the

16 University. We strongly support this solar

17 project on top of the former landfill.

18 Southern is extremely interested in

19 developing a partnership with the City of

20 Bridgeport centering around applied

21 sustainability.

22 I'm also an adjunct faculty

23 member in the science education and

24 environmental studies department. I've

25 taught courses in applied sustainability for

1 the past five years. The project before you
2 tonight makes environmental sense. It makes
3 economic sense and it makes sense for the
4 communities who live in Bridgeport.

5 Originally certificates of
6 environmental compatibility and public need
7 centered on environmental justice. This
8 particular project has potential to enhance
9 environmental justice rather than perhaps
10 limit it in some way, or disproportionately
11 disadvantage a certain community to hold more
12 of the burden than other communities.

13 Many of the public health
14 concerns have been raised tonight already.
15 There are both dollar costs that are attached
16 to that, but more accurately those costs are
17 measured in suffering, lost productivity and
18 wasted potential.

19 This project is a pathway to
20 cleaner air, land and water, not just for the
21 local community, but statewide and
22 regionally. It also contributes to reducing
23 the impacts of global climate change, though,
24 this particular project, the considerations
25 need to center around local impacts as well.

1 In terms of economic
2 responsibility, this type of project is not
3 unique only to Bridgeport. There are many
4 towns that a simple Google search can reveal
5 have similar projects that are sited on
6 former landfills. And this has changed since
7 a decade ago.

8 Ten years ago in the whole
9 United States 1 megawatt of utility renewable
10 energy was installed. This year -- excuse
11 me, in 2013, 2,847 megawatts of utility solar
12 were installed in this country. There's a
13 reason for that. The economics have changed
14 and the community has a chance to benefit
15 from that type of change.

16 In closing, SCSU would like to
17 educate our students in a way that
18 demonstrates to them that their communities
19 can make a difference, partnering with
20 Bridgeport will allow us to do that and
21 leverage a community benefit beyond the
22 solely environmental benefit.

23 Thanks very much and we look
24 forward to when the project will be
25 completed.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
2 much.

3 Jennifer Buchanan.

4 JENNIFER BUCHANAN: Hello.
5 Jennifer Buchanan, B-u-c-h-a-n-a-n.

6 Good evening. I live at 159
7 Seabright Avenue in Bridgeport, Connecticut.
8 First, for the record, I am in favor of
9 renewable energy. I've lived in Bridgeport,
10 also known as the Park City, for 16 years.
11 I've driven a Prius for 12. I purchased this
12 because of the zero emissions. The gas
13 mileage was a bonus in my decision to choose
14 a product that reduced my carbon footprint.

15 As to the clean energy
16 provided by this proposed power plant, and
17 our operating coal power plant, UI stated at
18 public hearings this solar power plant will
19 in no measurable way reduce the need or use
20 of our coal-fired power plant. I question
21 the constant message that this power plant,
22 the solar power plant will provide clean air.
23 While we all know this is true, by the
24 admission of UI, it will not be cleaner air
25 for the city of Bridgeport.

1 I'm opposed to placing a solar
2 energy plant on the landfill section, or any
3 section of Seaside Park. I would ask you to
4 please keep in mind the following when you
5 make your decision in placing the power plant
6 on this site. The average income for a
7 family of four in Bridgeport is \$43,000 and
8 the neighborhood close to this Park per the
9 City, Bridgeport data site.

10 This is an area of citizens
11 who cannot afford to take a vacation.
12 However for \$10 per year they have the
13 opportunity to spend every weekend in this
14 park surrounded on one side by the beaches
15 and the water of Long Island Sound, and on
16 the other side by a vast expanse of open
17 space full of trees, vegetation and wildlife.

18 Visually for everyone enjoying
19 the park, the landfill section has changed
20 over the years from an open, often burning
21 stench and smoke-filled dump into a visually
22 pleasing open space, unobstructed by urban
23 roads, fences and urban blight.

24 Installing an eight-foot fence
25 and four-foot high solar panels will, without

1 a doubt, change this landscape from an open
2 place into an urban industrial space,
3 affecting the ability to view and enjoy open
4 spaces of the most underserved citizens of
5 this city.

6 When you review landfill
7 energy plants being installed in other parts
8 of the country, with very few exceptions
9 these landfills are not adjoining public
10 parks, and when they are, the facility has a
11 walking and educational path as part of the
12 plan for the community to participate in.

13 UI has stated that the
14 landfill is off-limits for people to walk on,
15 so while in theory and on paper this looks
16 like a great use for this landfill, I argue
17 the nationwide trend of putting solar power
18 plants on closed landfills is not sensitive
19 or appropriate to this site when a review of
20 each landfill solar park is compared
21 side-by-side to Seaside Park.

22 I ask you to consider as you
23 deliberate this very sensitive important
24 issue. The landfill is joined to the park
25 with the separation of a small stone fence in

1 the picnic, beach and playground area. While
2 the top part of the solar park reviewed today
3 gives the appearance of being completely
4 hidden from view from anyone in the city or
5 the park, please consider the map of the
6 solar installation at the narrow end of the
7 field closest to the picnic, the newly
8 installed Sandy Hook Playground area. I do
9 not see any way an eight-foot fence and
10 four-foot solar panels can possibly be
11 screened by vegetation.

12 Solar power installation and
13 generation is a relatively new industry. As
14 stated, the State of Connecticut had to pass
15 special legislation to allow UI to build
16 these because, in the past, they have only
17 been a distributor of power. The process to
18 transfer the power from the cell plant into
19 the grid is very complicated and has the
20 potential to compromise current power grids
21 and supply if the transfer of solar power to
22 the grid has many technical problems.

23 The solar panels by design
24 will always be active in producing energy.
25 My concern is the ability of UI to assess the

1 solar power field and fuel-cell power plant
2 in the case of flooding. Last week Seaside
3 Park was closed to the public, closed
4 completely due to flooding. There was no
5 hurricane. There was no tropical storm, and
6 no storm surge. Just a summer storm at high
7 tide.

8 Bridgeport is known as the
9 Park City. The City Administration has
10 promoted our arts and is active in portraying
11 our city as a Park city and a haven for
12 artists. Our City Plan has incorporated an
13 industrial zone into our city plan, which is
14 not next to our city park.

15 The Mayor has mentioned
16 \$7 million over 20 years. What he fails to
17 mention is the current contract with UI does
18 not include a hold-harmless clause for the
19 City to lease the property to UI.

20 As a self-insured municipality
21 I have grave concerns that \$150,000 per year
22 for the lease of this property will not cover
23 the short- and long-term lawsuits this type
24 of facility next to a well-used public park
25 will incur. The eight-foot fence with barbed

1 wire on top at the entrance to the park where
2 the solar seal -- the solar power plant is
3 has the possibility of creating a very
4 attractive nuisance at the entrance to the
5 park, thus leaving the City vulnerable for
6 great liability.

7 I would ask you to keep in
8 mind that UI has listed in their submission
9 questions to you ten other viable locations
10 for this solar field and cell plant.
11 Specifically, 39 Pine Street in Bridgeport is
12 a possible site for this power plant. This
13 site is next to 95 and is surrounded by
14 industrial property. It is in an industrial
15 zone. It is not in and near to our Park.

16 Perhaps this site would allow
17 everyone to more easily see the solar panels
18 from 95. Keep the industrial plants in the
19 area of the city zoned for industrial plants
20 and keep our Olmsted Park, our Seaside Park,
21 the open green haven it is for the vast
22 majority of our citizens who cannot afford a
23 vacation, that can enjoy the nonurban,
24 nonindustrial park it is now.

25 I specifically looked at the

1 New Haven Landfill and one waterfront --

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. Are
3 you close to wrapping up?

4 JENNIFER BUCHANAN: I'm closed
5 to finished and I'm going to submit this,
6 too.

7 I specifically looked at the
8 New Haven landfill and 1 Waterfront Street in
9 New Haven. Both of these sites are remote,
10 in industrial areas and suitable for a power
11 plant.

12 I must say, I've enjoyed
13 spending today with you. I've been very
14 impressed by your questioning of UI and your
15 extreme sensitivity to the siting of this
16 power plant. And I ask you to consider the
17 least served of the city, and please ask UI
18 to put this power plant in an industrial zone
19 of which they have listed ten that are
20 available.

21 Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

23 You know, applause is just
24 going to detract from other people. We've
25 kept it quiet for everybody else. So just a

1 suggestion.

2 Mary is it Filo.

3 MARY FILO: Hi. My name is
4 Mary Filo, and I am a lifelong resident of
5 the Park City, Bridgeport.

6 One thing I noticed here
7 tonight is that the people who seem to be in
8 favor of this, the majority of them either
9 seem to work for the City or they don't live
10 here. And it's very curious to me, and I'm
11 hoping that other people are taking note of
12 that also.

13 With that said, I want to talk
14 about this and I want people to keep in mind
15 I'm not up here speaking up against green
16 energy. I'm all for green energy. This
17 whole issue to me is about the location of
18 the proposed solar panels.

19 I live at Grovers Avenue in
20 Black Rock. I can actually see the landfill
21 from my front porch and from the majority of
22 the neighborhood. Growing up, it was a dump.
23 It was on fire a lot. It stunk. Debris was
24 constantly blowing into the harbor. That was
25 a long time ago. I haven't seen that happen

1 in over 25, close to 30 years. My view now
2 is of a lush green hill.

3 Today was the first time in my
4 entire life I've ever had the opportunity of
5 standing on the landfill. I had no idea I
6 was in a dump, on a landfill, and it occurred
7 to me that had I brought somebody up there
8 with me who wasn't from the city and had no
9 idea what it was, they would never think it
10 was a dump or a landfill either.

11 There were trees, green grass,
12 dense green grass, lots of trees, signs of
13 wildlife. The landfill is trying to heal
14 itself, and it's doing pretty good. The
15 thought of cutting the trees down that have
16 grown back over the 30-year period kind of
17 makes my stomach hurt a little bit.

18 What I also noticed when I was
19 up there today was the view, the beautiful
20 view up there. There's Captains Cove. You
21 can see Fayerweather Yacht Club. You can
22 have a clear view of the harbor. You have
23 Fayerweather Towers, Port 5, Seabright Beach,
24 the Norden Club. I also realized they can
25 all see me. All those locations will now

1 lose that green hill. They will be looking
2 at solar panels along with a lot of residents
3 that live along that waterfront. That's very
4 concerning to me.

5 I see people's homes
6 potentially losing value. I see businesses
7 potentially losing business. I see people
8 who would normally come fishing in our
9 harbors, not really wanting to look at solar
10 panels. They're trying to get away from it.
11 I don't see them coming into the harbors
12 anymore.

13 I'm hoping that these are
14 issues that the Siting Committee will really
15 look at. We tried to talk to our Mayor about
16 it. We tried to talk to our City Council
17 about it. We talked to our Parks Commission
18 about it twice. They agreed with us once and
19 then suddenly changed their minds out of
20 nowhere.

21 I thank you all for having
22 this hearing today, and for giving me the
23 opportunity to get to the top of that hill.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Donna -- and I
25 can't really read the -- Curran.

1 DONNA CURRAN: Thank you very
2 much, Mr. Chairman and members of the
3 Council. I appreciate you being here
4 tonight.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you spell
6 your last name?

7 DONNA CURRAN: Oh, sure.
8 Absolutely. C-u-r-r-a-n.

9 I absolutely love the idea of
10 solar panels, but just not in Seaside Park.
11 I heard today that the ozone layer is
12 recovering and that's the result of 20 years
13 of policy change, and so I believe in these
14 kinds of political efforts to improve the
15 environment, but not on the back of what is a
16 gift from P.T. Barnum to the people of
17 Bridgeport.

18 He made a donation of that
19 land, and in his farsighted way, he chose
20 Frederick Olmsted to design it for us, and I
21 know most of you know that Frederick Olmsted
22 did Prospect Park and Central Park and a Park
23 at the Chicago Exposition. He designs 50
24 years out and that's the legacy.

25 By way of disclosure, I would

1 like you to know that I was a former member
2 of the Friends of Seaside Park. I was a
3 former elected official for the City Council
4 representing the district that is impacted
5 visually by this project. I also served on
6 the NRZ, I was on the board, and I was part
7 of the master plan. And in none of those
8 capacities did we ever plan or foresee this
9 type of project in Seaside Park. Whether
10 it's in the middle, the edge, it doesn't make
11 any difference. You all know the cumulative
12 effect of these types of things on -- overall
13 on an environment.

14 And to Jennifer's point, the
15 people who benefit most from this park in
16 addition to myself, but the people who live
17 in that neighborhood don't have the summer
18 camp options. And to see a clear sky without
19 obstruction, without seeing something
20 reminiscent of what's on the east end of
21 Bridgeport which is glittering Long Island
22 Sound, but you can't get near it. You can't
23 put your foot in it, because there's a
24 chain-link fence because that's where all the
25 energy plants are and the kids can't get to

1 the water.

2 So this is an irrevocable
3 thing that's being done to this piece of
4 property. And \$7 million over 20 years is
5 not significant. The budget on an annual
6 basis for the city of Bridgeport is close to
7 three quarters of a billion dollars. So it's
8 not an impressive number.

9 And if you detected a little
10 bit of cynicism from the gentleman who spoke
11 earlier, he used the word "vilified," this
12 has been a -- this hasn't been a forthright
13 process for the people of Bridgeport to get
14 their arms around. At one point it was said
15 to be a thousand units. Now it's up to
16 9,000. People were told even before the new
17 Council was sworn in that it was a done deal.

18 Also the -- I lost my place.
19 I'm sorry.

20 But I just wanted to -- oh,
21 and then there was a vote where it was
22 approved, and that there was some procedural
23 issue, and the vote was completely reversed
24 without any substantive changes to the
25 project.

1 So I just don't -- I would
2 just like you -- I saw the witnesses earlier
3 today take a vow and take their oath, and I'm
4 sure you probably had to do that too. So I'm
5 asking you please to examine your
6 consciences. As stewards of this land, with
7 a very highly-densely developed city with
8 very little natural outlets for its children
9 and citizens, if this is something you would
10 put on your seashore and your backyard.

11 I have no problem with solar
12 panels. You're the Siting Council. We heard
13 a lot of testimony tonight about how
14 wonderful this all is economically and energy
15 efficiently. And I agree with all that, but
16 you're the Siting Council and I'm asking you
17 to please veto this site. There are other
18 options open to the City. We don't have to
19 pay this high a price to have clean energy.

20 And if you really have a green
21 plan, there's nothing wrong with the passive
22 use of land. Look at Central Park, the
23 highest real estate in the nation, and it's
24 over 400 acres of passive recreation.

25 Thank you very much.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

2 Teresa Colomna.

3 TERESA COLOMNA: My name is

4 Teresa Colomna, C-o-l-u-m-n-a.

5 Mr. Chairman and members of
6 the Siting Council, I thank you for the
7 opportunity to speak at this public hearing.

8 I'm a resident Bridgeport,
9 Connecticut. I come before you in opposition
10 for the use of land located at Seaside Park
11 for use as a solar farm to develop renewable
12 energy as it can cause negative impacts and
13 dire consequences to our ecosystem along the
14 seashore.

15 There are numerous articles
16 from respected publications that state
17 existing solar farms are killing mass
18 quantities of birds, butterflies and other
19 creatures. I have copied and assembled some
20 articles and include a report which was
21 prepared by the National Fish and Wildlife
22 Forensics Laboratory representing their
23 findings on three different locations in
24 California, just to use as a guide.

25 Studies are concluding that

1 birds are not able to distinguish the glass
2 solar panels from bodies of water so as they
3 approach the solar panels the heat flux
4 either kills them, or singes their wings or
5 they fall prey to predators. This is
6 especially the case for low-flying birds,
7 predominately seabirds. In a matter of fact,
8 seabirds have been found victim in a facility
9 in California in the desert.

10 My concern is that Bridgeport
11 just opened Pleasure Beach, a protected
12 refuge for endangered birds, which is located
13 just a mere mile away down the seashore. In
14 a DEEP document dated September 4, 2014, it
15 only took into consideration the construction
16 aspect of the project, but not the impact of
17 the completed project.

18 It was even noted in their
19 documentation that a small falcon, which is a
20 state threatened species, was sited at the
21 landfill. We cannot stop the birds from
22 flying in the skies. And by allowing the
23 project to go forth at this site, it is like
24 building an incinerator deathtrap next door
25 to their refuge habitat.

1 I am concerned that this
2 renewable energy facility will have
3 consequences on our seashores all along the
4 Connecticut coastline. This can impact the
5 State and not just the City of Bridgeport.
6 Beachgoers all along the coastline will not
7 want to see these solar victims on their
8 sands. Dead or injured birds will invite
9 more predators and scavengers onto our
10 beaches.

11 There are so many more
12 suitable locations for a project of this
13 stature. We should learn what impact is
14 occurring at other seaside facilities and
15 have more independent studies done before we
16 embrace this project at this particular site.
17 We will have to live with any consequences a
18 wrong or hasty decision has created for the
19 next 20 years.

20 I thank you for your time. I
21 just want to let you know I'm not against
22 solar energy. I just feel this is the wrong
23 location for it.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

1 Hector Diaz.

2 HECTOR DIAZ: It's Hector
3 Diaz. It's spelled D-i-a-z.

4 First of all, I want to thank
5 everyone for coming down here, the Siting
6 Council. It's really nice to see that you
7 guys have taken an interest in coming to
8 Bridgeport and have come here. I know that
9 this is not a thing that you do very often.

10 I have a number -- I've been
11 listening to most of the people speaking and
12 my biggest concern, or most of my concerns
13 really are the fact that I live on Arthur
14 Street. It's at the end of the block. It's
15 a dead-end street, or it leads to a waterway.
16 It's a cul-de-sac, maybe a stone's throw away
17 from where this is supposed to be built.

18 Just this year, they built --
19 they must have built it before, but we just
20 had a family of Osprey nest right on that
21 corner, on that edge. And they're no more
22 than a stone's throw away.

23 Speaking of one of the young
24 ladies earlier, she told me that the effects
25 that this could have on wildlife, especially

1 birds and that was part of what affected me
2 today. It's not the reason that I came to
3 speak.

4 I've heard many speakers talk
5 about the high incidence of asthma here in
6 Bridgeport, and I wonder how did we get that
7 high? Is it incidence of asthma here and how
8 this is going to cure that? Maybe we should
9 be looking at what caused those high
10 incidences of asthma, and how that -- how
11 they could turn that around to make that
12 better before we can look at new ideas that
13 probably wouldn't have any effect on it at
14 all.

15 In the morning when I wake up
16 in these months coming up in October or so,
17 there's a flock, I'd say, maybe 12, 13
18 turkeys that I see in my front -- the front
19 of my house. This is Bridgeport,
20 Connecticut, an urban center. I grew up on
21 the east side. You would never think that
22 you'd see turkey walking in the middle of
23 your street. Also deer, I've seen deer in
24 the backyard. These are all things that will
25 be affected by this.

1 I'm going to go in another
2 direction. I think that Frederick Olmsted as
3 it was said earlier, was an artist. His
4 works of art were parks, Bridgeport being one
5 of them, Seaside Park. To destroy that or to
6 change that in any way would be akin to
7 changing the Mona Lisa or any of the other
8 works of art that are protected by so many
9 other things.

10 I know this is in your hands.
11 I'm here as a resident. I'm a former state
12 representative, but I'm here as a resident to
13 tell you that it's very important that we
14 keep the park as it is. I'm all for solar
15 panels. I'm all for other ways to make this
16 work. I just think that the park is not the
17 place for it.

18 Thank you. Thank you for your
19 time.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
21 Nancy Rockwood.

22 NANCY ROCKWOOD: My name is
23 Nancy Rockwood, R-o-c-k-w-o-o-d.

24 I would like to take issue
25 with the gentleman who said that the land

1 has, today it has little value. I think it
2 has a great deal of value.

3 In June when I purchased my
4 Fayerweather Towers condo overlooking the
5 site, I saw a beautiful hill covered with
6 grass and trees. When a friend recently
7 asked me if I lived near the old dump, I
8 said, what dump? I had no clue there was or
9 had been a dump there.

10 And I was -- I've been upset
11 seeing some of the PR that's gone out. Mayor
12 Bill Finch's description of the proposed site
13 as quote, an old landfill which has been
14 largely viewed as an eyesore for several
15 years, unquote, and quote, an old and
16 currently unused dump, unquote. I don't
17 think that's a fair description.

18 I would point out that that
19 uses the passive voice so that we aren't
20 saying who thinks this. And also it implies
21 that people still think that way. It is in
22 fact a beautiful piece of land. As anyone
23 can attest who walked the site this
24 afternoon, the site is simply gorgeous.

25 Adding 8,550 solar panels

1 surrounded by an eight-foot high dark brown
2 fence will turn the land back into an
3 eyesore. And as I, you know, and I will be
4 seeing that and I understand the fence will
5 be three feet out from the panels. It's
6 going to be very clear to many people. I
7 would like to say, too, I'm all for solar
8 energy. I've campaigned for it.

9 I think this is the wrong
10 place for it. I understand that the City was
11 supposed to keep the landfills clay cap mown
12 and that trees, bushes and tall grasses were
13 not supposed to grow on it, penetrating the
14 clay cap with billions of roots. Those roots
15 are pathways for water into the cap and below
16 it.

17 I would like to know if plants
18 and burrowing insects and animals have
19 compromised the inadequately maintained cap,
20 or if they have potential to do so, so that
21 over time the cap may not be adequate to
22 support the weight of the solar panel
23 installation.

24 I'd be sad if Bridgeport made
25 a regrettable and shortsighted decision on

1 behalf of current and future generations who
2 treasure beautiful and increasingly scarce
3 waterfront. Let's follow Chicago's example
4 and Boston's example and keep our public
5 waterfront beautiful and available for our
6 citizens to enjoy. I understand that this
7 statement is consistent with the mission of
8 the Long Island Sound study that's part of
9 the EPA. I would like to pay attention to
10 that. I think that's the big picture and
11 that's where the glory comes when people look
12 back.

13 I believe there's more
14 long-term potential benefit for the City in
15 protecting and showcasing it's beautiful
16 public space, then in turning a now beautiful
17 and currently inaccessible space into
18 something ugly. When considering potential
19 green energy sites and I encourage us to do
20 that, please look at blighted industrial
21 property or city rooftops or infrequently
22 visited parks that are not drop-dead gorgeous
23 public waterfront property.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Karen Niesyn.

1 KAREN NIESYN: Good evening,
2 Council. Thank you for being here. My name
3 is Karen Niesyn, N-i-e-s-y-n, a resident of
4 Bridgeport. And I've been with you most of
5 the afternoon listening to the hearing and I
6 also toured the site.

7 I just want to say that I've
8 heard a lot about solar energy today, a lot
9 of proponents, a lot of people who love it,
10 but nobody -- very few people are talking
11 about, who support this project, are talking
12 about the location itself.

13 Now, I have am not technically
14 savvy and I appreciate your knowledge and
15 experience in this, in this field. I was
16 listening to the questioning --

17 Hello fly.

18 -- today and I was rather
19 surprised by the incomplete and cavalier
20 responses to some of your concerns. The
21 drainage issues, erosion, the composition of
22 panels, the location of the 500-year
23 floodplain, the \$10 million grant that is
24 supposed to design a flood control plan for
25 this area, the settling under the weight.

1 That is a great concern. I'm sure that you
2 will take these, all of these issues into
3 consideration and weigh them very carefully.

4 I was just moved today when I
5 was up there. I think I witnessed a miracle.
6 When I first came to Bridgeport in 1987 that
7 was really a dump and it was smoky and filthy
8 and today it is beautiful. It is teeming
9 with wildlife.

10 I believe in open space. I
11 think open space is a wonderful psychological
12 and economic benefit for people in this city
13 and we have so very little of it. Our
14 wildlife is beautiful. The panoramic views
15 are simply stunning, as you know. Certainly
16 there is a better use for than an industrial
17 park that will tie up this space for 25
18 years.

19 I thank you for your time
20 again.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

22 Kate Rivera.

23 KATE RIVERA: I don't know --
24 well, the first thing I wanted to say is that
25 the land has repaired itself. My name is

1 Kate Rivera. I'm a south-end resident. I
2 live in Seaside Village, so I'm actually on
3 the opposite side of these guys in Black Rock
4 here, so really probably closest to what's
5 going on.

6 And where I live we have
7 white-tailed deer, turkeys, parrots,
8 muskrats, all different types of animals and
9 they live on the landfill site. What
10 concerns me is the precedent that we're
11 setting, that we are using a portion of our
12 beloved park -- we live in the Park City --
13 for this industrial complex.

14 You know, it went from a
15 thousand solar panels to now it's almost
16 10,000. And now there's the fuel cell and
17 it's just going to wreck the area that is
18 finally up and coming. UB is making big
19 changes. You know, Marina is the housing
20 project which is nearby, is going to be gone
21 in the long-term plan. And this, this does
22 not suit the area.

23 Other sites were not
24 investigated and I think that's what bothers
25 me the most, is why are we dumping this

1 industrial complex, this solar? I'm all
2 about solar and no one is against anything
3 solar. I think that that's clear, but there
4 are so many other sites that are suitable in
5 the city that could be remediated. And I
6 would rather see those sites used than, you
7 know, our view of Long Island Sound. You
8 know, that's also a draw for us. It brings
9 people to the city.

10 And I think what we're getting
11 in return for this is basically raping the
12 taxpayers, because \$7 million over 20 years,
13 that's nothing, you know. And you know,
14 Barnum gave us this Park and he entrusted us
15 to be stewards of this land and it's just a
16 travesty to do this.

17 And I really hope that you all
18 will think long and hard about this decision
19 and, you know, make the right choice for the
20 long term. There's other places that this
21 can be. There are other places.

22 Thank you very much for your
23 time. And I just want to bring up one other
24 thing. The Parks Commission initially voted
25 unanimously -- the baby is upset about this,

1 too -- the Parks Commission voted unanimously
2 not to have this in our park, not to use even
3 a little portion of our park. And I don't
4 know what happened that they came back very
5 quickly and they unanimously -- not
6 unanimously, but they changed their vote the
7 opposite way. So I feel like that everything
8 hasn't been on the up and up with this
9 either, and I'm trusting you guys to make the
10 right decision.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 Jim Fox.

14 JIM FOX: My name is Jim Fox,
15 F-o-x.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, you
17 changed your name but that's all right.

18 JIM FOX: I'm a retired
19 electrical contractor. I was a master
20 electrician for many, many years and when I
21 heard about the solar panels going into the
22 Seaside Park I was floored. I said this is
23 great. Renewable energy. We all need it.
24 We're all going to be looking for it down the
25 road. Anything to get off the UI grid is

1 fine with me.

2 But the interesting thing with
3 the dump or the landfill -- and I started
4 doing research on landfills and I'll give you
5 a copy. This is the 14-page copy on every
6 landfill basically in the United States along
7 with the approval of the EPA. They'll
8 explain it to you in detail and I hope you'll
9 all read it. You really have to, because
10 it's very interesting.

11 The landfill we have right now
12 down at Seaside Park has been around for
13 many, many years, coming up on 30 years, I
14 believe, since its closing. But the problem
15 at Seaside Park -- and carefully listen to
16 this -- is that the cap that caps that
17 landfill is obsolete. It only has a life
18 expectancy of 20 years and you have to put
19 another cap over it or repair the one that
20 you have now. So I'm wondering how we're
21 going to repair that cap in the next 20 years
22 with 9,000 solar panels on top of it. It
23 doesn't make any sense.

24 There's fissures and holes in
25 that cap presently. There's no way that

1 you're going to stop the leachate coming off
2 that as it is right now and the methane gas
3 that's coming off of that. And all of the
4 pollutants that are coming out into Long
5 Island Sound are coming off of that hill and
6 it's a terrible thing.

7 Now I sat on boards and
8 commissions for over 30 years. Conservation,
9 town planning and zoning, you name it, I sat
10 there and I listened. And I was just like
11 you, listening just like you saying, give me
12 something to shoot it down. You haven't
13 given me anything. And I know it's not your
14 charge to sit up here and to discuss
15 pollutants and the environment. It's really
16 not your charge. You're a Siting Council.
17 You have to find a place for this, and I'm
18 saying this is the wrong spot. This is a
19 terrible location. It's going to affect
20 everybody.

21 The biggest fear I have coming
22 off this landfill is the mercury vapors that
23 are coming off this hill, and as an
24 electrician I have part of putting those
25 mercury vapors into that landfill. Mercury

1 vapors kill you. They kill kids, birth
2 defects, it goes down the line and on a good
3 windy day a mercury vapor can travel from
4 Bridgeport to Stratford. And on a calm day
5 with a very light wind mercury vapors can
6 travel across Seaside Park. They say on a
7 nice calm day 175 yards, that's how far it
8 will travel. This landfill that we're
9 looking at is dangerous. It's not only
10 dangerous to the people, it's also dangerous
11 to the workers who are going to put these
12 solar panels up.

13 I ask them, are you going to
14 wire these solar panels, which is very
15 important, as an explosion-proof location
16 similar to what you would do in a gas
17 station, an airport or a bakery, to make sure
18 nobody gets hurt with the methane coming off
19 here? Twenty percent moisture is all you
20 need to make methane move again. And on a
21 good rainy day or a light rainy day
22 20 percent isn't that far off. So I can go
23 on.

24 I was at the Parks Commission
25 meeting, the second meeting and I can tell

1 you straight out these guys at the first
2 meeting said they wanted to put in a
3 resolution at that meeting to make sure no
4 solar park's panels would be on any park in
5 Bridgeport. The second meeting they turned
6 around and said, well, that was dropped.

7 I can only say this. We're
8 looking out for our kids' health. We're
9 looking for the future. This landfill and
10 cap, and you'll read that in this report, is
11 obsolete and I hope you shoot it down. I
12 hope you shoot down with prejudice. And have
13 them go and pick a location.

14 Thank you.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

16 Loretta Lazaris.

17 LORETTA LAZARIS: Good evening
18 everyone. My name is Loretta Lazaris, L-a,
19 -z as in zebra, -a-r-i, -s as in Sam.

20 Thank you for letting me speak
21 here tonight and thank you, everyone for
22 being here. I know we're all here --
23 actually I feel we're all on the same page.
24 We're here for Bridgeport moving forward.
25 We're here for the health of our population.

1 We're here for clean air. We're here for new
2 directions and success of Bridgeport. It is
3 all because we love our city. So we're all
4 on the same page. For the most part, except
5 maybe for just a paragraph or two and I would
6 like to address those paragraphs.

7 I also agree that the landfill
8 is evidence of a miracle in Bridgeport. I've
9 only been here eight years. I'm a resident
10 and it is just beautiful what I've watched.
11 I eat dinner with the falcons that are
12 fishing. They have dinner the same time I'm
13 having dinner, when I'm sitting at the dock.

14 I watched the deer. I didn't
15 know deer could swim. Did you know deer
16 could swim? Now, I know deer in the suburbs
17 is a problem. They eat everything and it can
18 be a nuisance, so people who don't live in
19 the city might say why on earth would anybody
20 want to keep deer around? But in Bridgeport,
21 in a big city, in this urban jungle, all big
22 cities have the tendency to be vulnerable to
23 being urban jungles. It's the nature of the
24 beast. So we are very fortunate in our
25 miracle at Bridgeport.

1 I believe also, and I won't
2 say too much about it, the other, there are
3 other sites in Bridgeport that would be good
4 to -- although I don't have that knowledge
5 and that fact in front of me -- those facts
6 in front of me, but I know, you know, you
7 have teams that could work on a better site.
8 I mean, I'd be willing to work on a team to
9 find a better site for the solar project in
10 Bridgeport.

11 I say we could keep it in
12 Bridgeport. It would still bring money into
13 the City, still bring jobs into the city,
14 still have the green energy. I think that's
15 wonderful, however, I think we have to be
16 really careful about the money. It is very
17 seductive to jump on the money. In our
18 culture, money is the driver and it's very
19 easy to jump on that car and run for the
20 money, but you've got to be really careful of
21 what the risks -- what you are letting go.

22 And I think the natural part
23 of Bridgeport and our parks is part of our
24 heritage and we're lucky to have it. We
25 should be grateful that we have it and we

1 should honor it. And we've got to be really
2 careful with the money, that we don't end up
3 being the archetypal prostitutes turning
4 Bridgeport into that. I don't think that's
5 what we want. So we've got to be really
6 careful.

7 And the value of our land is
8 not just stuff that's consumable. It can be
9 left alone. It's better left alone. It's
10 beautiful.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 Diane Rello.

14 Beverly Balaz.

15 BEVERLY BALAZ: Beverly Balaz.

16 Good evening. My name is
17 Beverly Balaz, B-a-l-a-z. I'm a resident of
18 Bridgeport, and I'm here to ask you for your
19 consideration to stop this project going
20 forward into Seaside Park.

21 In addition to solar panels,
22 the fuel cells attached to that, and as we've
23 heard before fuel cells are noisy, they are
24 an eyesore because at night they look awful,
25 and oh, by the way, they emit pollutants.

1 I support and I've said this
2 in the past, I support the Mayor's interest
3 in being green, but there are other locations
4 that are simply more appropriate than
5 installing it on our Beachside Park along
6 beautiful shorelines.

7 Although people refer to this
8 area simply as a dumpsite, and despite the
9 fact that this disgrace happened years ago,
10 the area has very much overcome that tragedy
11 and on its very own has come to life. Grass
12 has gone. Shrubs have taken root. Birds fly
13 above and land on it and animals live there.

14 We heard tonight about
15 economic development. I'm in full agreement
16 of that. We've talked about job creation.
17 Absolutely, but employees turn into residents
18 and where will that person want to buy their
19 home? Are they going to buy it in Bridgeport
20 so when they go down to that area and they
21 see solar panels and fuel cells? Or will
22 they take their real estate purchase over to
23 Stratford, Fairfield or surrounding towns?

24 Please consider to leave this
25 as an open space. It doesn't need to be

1 reinvented into anything. It is truly
2 beautiful. It is open. It's airy, and it's
3 extremely pleasing and beautiful to look at
4 and that's what open space is about.

5 Thank you for your
6 consideration again in making the right
7 decision on this, and thank you for the
8 opportunity to speak tonight.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
10 Beverly Balaz.

11 BEVERLY BALAZ: Oh, that was
12 me.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry.
14 Michelle -- Michelle Torres.
15 John Torres.
16 Jacob Robison.
17 Susan Brannelly.

18 A VOICE: No, Jacob is here.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry.

20 JACOB ROBISON: Hello, Siting
21 Council. My name is Jacob Robison,
22 R-o-b-i-s-o-n. And I'm here on behalf of the
23 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit Ideas For
24 Us. I did have something written up here,
25 but I want to address a couple comments that

1 were just made.

2 There were a lot of people
3 here that are saying not in my backyard, you
4 know, it's, you know, something like solar in
5 Bridgeport seems very scary to a lot of
6 people. I understand change is scary, but
7 solar is very great and it's going to be very
8 great for the economy of Bridgeport and great
9 for the environment of Bridgeport.

10 And also there were a couple
11 of mentions about birds being fried by these
12 solar panels. That is -- that is completely
13 not going to happen. That's a completely
14 different kind of solar system there such as
15 the Ivanpah solar system that's actually made
16 of a bunch of mirrors heating a water
17 turbine. So there's going to be no fried
18 birds on Seaside Park, which is probably good
19 for the food vendors there.

20 But going back to what I wrote
21 up, as a 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit
22 organization with sizable activity in
23 Bridgeport, Ideas For Us shows support for
24 the construction of a solar array on Seaside
25 Landfill. 2.2 megawatts of solar energy or

1 9,000 panels is a significant investment in
2 the green energy future of Bridgeport. Zero
3 emissions energy production is important to
4 Bridgeport because we are taking
5 responsibility for reducing our greenhouse
6 gas emissions and contribution to climate
7 change. Ninety-eight percent of scientists
8 agree that climate change is largely caused
9 by human activities, most notably the burning
10 of fossil fuels.

11 In Bridgeport we have been
12 feeling the effects of climate change. For
13 those of us that have experienced Super Storm
14 Sandy and Winter Storm Nemo, we know that
15 this is no laughing matter. As climate
16 change progresses Bridgeport will be hit with
17 more extreme storms and damaging storms
18 putting lives and homes at risk. The time is
19 now to act on climate and Bridgeport needs
20 this solar installation.

21 Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

23 Susan Brannelly.

24 SUSAN BRANNELLY: Good

25 evening. My name is Susan Brannelly, it's

1 B-r-a-n-n-e-l-l-y, and I sit on the City
2 Council.

3 I, first of all, want to thank
4 you, all for spending your entire day here in
5 the city of Bridgeport. It's the city we
6 love, and we are very grateful that you've
7 invested so much time in this very important
8 decision.

9 Secondly, I would like to
10 apologize for the sound system in this room
11 because I sit up there and I know exactly
12 what you're doing when you hold your ears
13 like this. It's a very, very difficult
14 situation you're in to try and hear every
15 word.

16 I came with prepared comments,
17 which I may bore you to tears with, but after
18 sitting in and hearing everyone speak I
19 wanted to just say a few things. I represent
20 the 130th District, which is the area that
21 looks across the Harbor onto the landfill.

22 And this group over here are
23 my neighbors and my constituents, and they
24 are certainly a very vocal group. And
25 it's -- there's one thing that I wanted to

1 draw out of what was said. This nice lady
2 here said -- that her last comment about this
3 landfill that she's been looking at for the
4 past eight years is drop-dead gorgeous. And
5 that it is, because it is beautiful. It's
6 green. It's a green, lush hill and if you
7 were to play on it, to picnic on it, to ride
8 your bike on it, to go for a walk around it
9 there's that whole drop-dead part of things.
10 It's a toxic landfill and it will be for a
11 very long time.

12 In the meantime, to use it for
13 a benefit for the City, to be able to
14 generate clean energy, to be able to continue
15 this whole clean and green project, and to
16 make Bridgeport the City that it was not 30,
17 40, 50 years ago when it was abusing this
18 land is a very important piece of this
19 puzzle.

20 I am now going to bore you to
21 tears with my little letter.

22 As a City Council Member
23 representing the 130th District, I am
24 thrilled to speak in support of the green
25 energy park project. My district is home to

1 the Bridgeport's eco-technology park where
2 the worlds second-largest fuel cell produces
3 tremendous energy and virtually no air
4 pollution.

5 It is a great source of pride
6 that our previously abandoned industrial area
7 is now breathing new life with green jobs and
8 clean energy. The green energy park project
9 is planned just across Black Rock Harbor from
10 my district. Currently, we can look across
11 the Harbor directly in view of the landfill.

12 Though this was land
13 historically abused by us, the Seaside
14 Landfill now has an opportunity to generate
15 clean energy and great pride. This project
16 demonstrates Bridgeport's commitment to being
17 the cleanest greenest city.

18 There is a very vocal group of
19 my constituents who oppose this project.
20 Their views are based on basically two
21 issues, believing that this landfill can be
22 rehabilitated into a viable park and the
23 belief that the solar panels are going to
24 take the water views enjoyed by our shoreline
25 neighbors. After much research and

1 discussion with the project managers, I
2 disagree with each of these.

3 Up to and including I went to
4 the different residences that were affected.
5 Some of the folks that are here, I've been in
6 their homes and took pictures of the
7 landfills, and then brought them for
8 renderings to be drawn with as close to zero
9 impact as you could imagine on each one of
10 these residents, their view.

11 As you're well aware, the
12 green energy parks spearheaded by the United
13 Illuminating consists of close to 9,000 solar
14 panels and a 2.8-megawatt fuel cell. It will
15 create up to 92 jobs. It's expected to earn
16 the City Bridgeport \$7 million over the
17 course of its lease.

18 And once complete the green
19 energy park will power up to 5,000 homes with
20 virtually no air pollution -- with
21 air-pollution free energy. That's critical
22 to a healthier environment for our kids since
23 Bridgeport suffers from asthma rates that are
24 nearly three times higher than the state
25 average. We are not going to cure it, but we

1 have got to start somewhere.

2 I enthusiastically support
3 this project as it creates jobs, produces
4 clean energy and grows our tax base. I hope
5 you'll support me -- join me in the support
6 of this project.

7 Thank you very much.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

9 Linda Simard.

10 LINDA SIMARD: Hello. My name
11 is Linda Simard, S-i-m-a-r-d.

12 To hear a lot of the people
13 speak about these panels you would think that
14 its going to solve all our problems. It's
15 going to bring business to the area. It's
16 going to clean our air. We're going to get
17 rid of asthma. Everything, all our ills will
18 be cured. When, in fact, I think that it
19 doesn't really address any of those issues.

20 It's a small installation. It
21 does not give us a significant amount of
22 power, but what it does do is ruin the vista
23 from Seaside Park, one of the few open spaces
24 that we have in the city. And our Mayor has
25 often talked about how we're at a

1 disadvantage because we have so little land
2 in the city.

3 Why would we take one of the
4 few beautiful places that we have that's
5 open, and put something industrial on it when
6 we have brownfields all over the city? I
7 would love to see an installation be put in
8 the city somewhere or even outside of the
9 city, but not in a place like that.

10 And my other objection to all
11 of this -- and I don't know how interested
12 you are -- is the lease between UI and the
13 City. It's so unfavorable to the City that
14 the people in the City who approved it should
15 be ashamed of themselves.

16 It is irrevocable. If UI
17 doesn't hold up their part of the deal the
18 City cannot get out of this lease. It
19 actually says that regardless of any default
20 the City has to keep this lease. For 20
21 years UI will have total control of this
22 property. If they build something else, if
23 they neglect to take care of it, anything
24 they do to it we have no recourse. The lease
25 remains in place for 20 years.

1 Furthermore, there's two
2 five-year options. It could be 30 years. So
3 in my lifetime that land will never look any
4 better than it does today and that bothers
5 me.

6 Aside from that, the liability
7 for the environmental conditions, that
8 remains with the City regardless of what UI
9 does, and I urge you to read 10-B and -C of
10 the lease between UI and the City. We can't
11 afford that kind of liability. We're
12 self-insured. UI has deep pockets and
13 regardless of what they do to that property,
14 that liability will remain with the City. So
15 I don't see that as any kind of solution.

16 There's no money in it for us.
17 \$7 million is a lot of money to you and I,
18 but to the City over 20 years it's a
19 pittance. It barely pays the Mayor's salary
20 and the little amount of money that they give
21 our Common Council. It doesn't pay anything
22 of any real consequence for the City.

23 And so I think considering the
24 fact that it is unfavorable from a business
25 standpoint and also unfavorable from just a

1 beautification standpoint, open space
2 standpoint, that I really hope that you will
3 reject the petition to put it in Seaside
4 Park.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

7 Kevin Blagys.

8 KEVIN BLAGYS: Hi. Good
9 evening, Connecticut Siting Council. Thank
10 you for getting together and reviewing the
11 issue we have here upon us in the City of
12 Bridgeport.

13 Before I start the pictures
14 I'm going to hold up, and I'm submitting into
15 the record. There are five pictures that
16 were taken yesterday basically water views of
17 Seaside Park. You can see the entire
18 landfill and the pictures will speak for
19 themselves.

20 So my name is Kevin Blagys,
21 that's B-l-a-g-y-s. I'm a Bridgeport
22 resident and business owner. I have a
23 marine-oriented business. I work on boats.
24 I'm a scuba diver. I do all types of
25 underwater work on boats. I'm based in

1 Captain's Cove, which is right by the
2 landfill across the harbor. I'm on the water
3 every single day and in the water. I'm also
4 a resident of Black Rock and I'd also like to
5 thank the Council, one of the Council people,
6 my local Councilman for getting me here
7 tonight.

8 I thought I missed the window
9 to protest this solar farm, but I'm happy I
10 haven't missed it completely.

11 Okay. So I'm just going to
12 hold up two pictures. I guess we've got a
13 camera going, so this is a view from
14 Captain's Cove looking over the landfill on a
15 nice bright day.

16 And the second picture is
17 basically the same.

18 No industry, just trees and
19 grass and wildlife. Those pictures have been
20 submitted to the record.

21 I am opposed to the solar
22 project because of its change in land use,
23 the industrialization of a public park, the
24 destruction of wildlife habitat, the
25 environmental effects of construction on a

1 landfill site, the airborne and runoff
2 pollution.

3 So one of the highlights of my
4 day, when I'm out there on the water is
5 towards sunset when the Canadian geese start
6 their flight and they fly right over this
7 landfill. There's wild turkeys that every
8 morning at sunrise they fly across the harbor
9 and feed on the other side of the Harbor.
10 And at sunset they return to flight and I'm
11 lucky to see these observations.

12 There's blue herring. The
13 egret has made an incredible comeback and
14 they're all over the shoreline. There's also
15 deer on the landfill.

16 There's also a movie just
17 filmed in Black Rock which hit the big screen
18 this last month. It was called, And So It
19 Goes, with Michael Douglas and Diane Keaton.
20 And I couldn't be more proud to be from
21 Bridgeport to see the shots of the harbor and
22 the landfill is in the shots. And it would
23 be a shame to look back and say -- to be
24 reminded of what was.

25 Bridgeport, the Park City. I

1 commend the City for its use and maintenance
2 of parks and its green initiative, but
3 installing a solar farm on the landfill is a
4 step in the wrong direction. I'm all for
5 green energy, but this is not a green
6 project.

7 It's our park and if this
8 project is approved we will lose a piece of
9 it. The greenest decision the Council could
10 make is to leave Seaside Park green.
11 Frederick Olmsted's design of the park was
12 for use by the people, not industry. This is
13 the wrong place for a solar farm.

14 This Harbor already has a lot
15 of industry. We have a waste incinerator.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you getting
17 close to wrapping it up soon?

18 KEVIN BLAGYS: I am. I am.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 KEVIN BLAGYS: This, this
21 harbor already has a lot of industry on it.
22 We have a waste incinerator, we have a -- one
23 of two waste treatment plants in Bridgeport
24 are on this harbor across from the landfill.
25 And I believe that that plant is overrun, so

1 we have a lot of issues on the harbor as it
2 is. And opening the door to another piece of
3 industry is a step in the wrong direction.

4 I put these pictures in your
5 hands. Please take a look at them and I hope
6 they're not a picture -- I hope they're not
7 just a memory.

8 So thank you for your time.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
10 much.

11 Larry Robinson.

12 LARRY ROBINSON: Good evening.
13 My name is Larry Robinson. I am the Chairman
14 and Commissioner for People with Disabilities
15 for the City of Bridgeport.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you spell
17 your last name and speak up and into the mic?

18 LARRY ROBINSON: Is this
19 better?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Much better.

21 LARRY ROBINSON: Thank you,
22 sir. Okay. My name is Larry Robinson. I am
23 the Chairman for the Commission for People
24 with Disabilities for the City of Bridgeport.
25 And I wish to address the Honorable

1 Connecticut Siting Council about my support
2 of the solar panel project at Seaside Park,
3 which is the city's old landfill.

4 I'm a resident of this
5 beautiful city of Bridgeport. I volunteered
6 to serve my country the United States Army
7 during the Vietnam era. I stood for my
8 country and was willing to put my life on the
9 line because I believe in the greatness of
10 our country.

11 The benefits that solar energy
12 brings far outweigh any perceived visual
13 impact to any neighborhood. The solar panels
14 can make a positive impact on our cities.
15 The proposed location of solar panels would
16 be placed on dormant, vacant land that was
17 used as a landfill. This would be the best
18 and most feasible way to utilize that
19 property.

20 The result of this project can
21 reduce electrical load, but it will also help
22 to reduce the greenhouse gas footprint which
23 we all know about so well. That will take a
24 positive environmental step and leave the
25 world a better place for our kids, our

1 grandkids and our great great grandkids.

2 Social change, the individual
3 and personal energy intelligence that comes
4 with the process of installing solar panels,
5 energy efficiency measures, bring about a
6 personal change of perspective that is vital
7 to our constrained power source and power
8 source of the future.

9 The collective public thinking
10 about energy use of this generation is
11 beginning to change which will continue to
12 develop as we educate with government
13 incentives. Ladies and gentlemen, we are at
14 the beginning of the cultural energy
15 revolution.

16 Everyone did not agree with
17 progress, but if progress is stopped by a
18 few, then we would still be using coal as our
19 main energy source.

20 Climate change. We have been
21 unfortunate to experience most of the extreme
22 weather changes that caused great
23 destructions in our cities and around the
24 world. Solar panels if installed at the old
25 vacant landfill will reduce the carbon

1 released into the atmosphere. By approving a
2 project like this it helps the City and the
3 world to see that we can make strides against
4 climate change. Bridgeport can be a role
5 model to our nation for our energy
6 revolution.

7 In addition to the above this
8 project will result in much needed jobs in
9 the city of Bridgeport also and the 20-year
10 ground lease with the United Illuminating
11 will result in about \$7 million to help the
12 City's finances. We are building an industry
13 that will be with us for decades to come by
14 supporting sustainable and renewable energy
15 sources.

16 As Bridgeport moves towards
17 the future in sustainable energy, please,
18 please, please, vote to allow the much needed
19 solar panel installation on this unused
20 former landfill site.

21 Thank you for your time and
22 for allowing me to express my devotion to
23 this project.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very
25 much.

1 All right. We have one
2 more -- you're the last one. So, please
3 just --

4 MICHELE RETAMAR: That's the
5 one you'll remember. Michele Retamar, R as
6 in Robert, -e-t as in Thomas, a-m-a-r.

7 Born and raised in Bridgeport.
8 St. Vincent's Hospital. Lived in Evergreen,
9 which is now Stop & Shop. Went to Black Rock
10 School. Currently living in Seaside Village.

11 Went to Germany last year and
12 solar panels everywhere. We need to get out
13 of the dark ages. We need to think about
14 cost-of-living, jobs.

15 Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

17 The Council will now close the
18 public comment session of the hearing.

19 And I'd like to announce that
20 we will continue the evidentiary portion of
21 the hearing that we started at three o'clock.
22 The Council office is in New Britain in
23 Hearing Room 1 on Tuesday, September 30th, at
24 11 a.m.

25 Please note that anyone who

1 has not become a party or intervenor but
2 desires to make his or her views known to the
3 Council may file written statements with the
4 Council until the record closes.

5 Copies of the transcript of
6 the hearing will be filed at the Bridgeport
7 City Clerk's office, and I hereby declare the
8 hearing adjourned.

9 Thank you all for your
10 participation.

11 (Whereupon, the above
12 proceedings were adjourned at 9:07 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

1
2 I hereby certify that the foregoing 107
3 pages are a complete and accurate
4 computer-aided transcription of my original
5 verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing in
6 Re: PETITION NO. 1104, PETITION FROM THE
7 UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY FOR A DECLARATORY
8 RULING THAT NO CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
9 COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED IS REQUIRED FOR
10 THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND
11 OPERATION FOR OF A 2.2 MEGAWATT SOLAR
12 PHOTOVOLTAIC FACILITY AND A 2.8 MEGAWATT FUEL
13 CELL FACILITY ON APPROXIMATELY 22 ACRES OF
14 THE FORMER SEASIDE LANDFILL LOCATED AT 530
15 WALDEMERE AVENUE, BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT,
16 which was held before ROBERT STEIN,
17 Chairperson, at the Bridgeport City Hall,
18 Council Chambers, 45 Lyon Terrace,
19 Bridgeport, Connecticut, September 11, 2014.
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23
24
25

Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857
Court Reporter
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90 Brainard Road, Suite 103
Hartford, Connecticut 06114