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July 21, 2016

The Hon. Anne Scott, Chair
Martin County Board of County Commissioners
2401 SE Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34996

Re: U.S. EcoGen Martin Project

Dear Commissioner Scott,

US EcoGen appreciates your initiation of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process that occurred by resolution on May 24, 2016. As promised, less than two weeks later, on June 6, we submitted the Comprehensive Plan amendment applications including application fees in the amount of \$14,250. The applications included the land use swap and text amendments, which had been discussed at the May 24 meeting, and attached as exhibits to the resolution.

As you know, EcoGen Martin already had strong community support - from Indiantown, the agricultural community, business leaders, renewable energy advocates and many other stakeholders. The local community, especially Indiantown, was interested and excited about the Project. We believe that the proposed site in Indiantown was the perfect location, ideally suited in the midst of other industrial, power generation and agricultural activities.

EcoGen Martin's carbon-neutral, state-of-the-art, renewable energy facility would: create hundreds of temporary construction jobs and about 160 permanent energy- and agriculture-related jobs; become one of the highest paying tax generators in Martin County; and create new opportunities to use fallow citrus land to grow energy crops in the form of sustainably harvested eucalyptus tree plantations.

For the project to be successful, however, there needed to be a genuine spirit of cooperation from county staff and elected officials – not just the local community. On June 1, 2016, we submitted the concept plan and requested a development review workshop with County staff. On June 23, 2016, we attended the workshop with County staff, where the discussion seemed productive and encouraging.

Given the constructive and positive meeting on June 23, we were both surprised and dismayed when we received staff's recommendation of denial on July 8, 2016. This was completely inconsistent with the numerous prior discussions with staff and the feedback we received from staff during the June 23 workshop. While we disagreed with staff's rationale for denial of our application, we were assured that their alternative text language could allow the EcoGen Martin Project to move forward.

Then, on July 11 and 12, staff provided copies of emails from Maggy Hurchalla and other private citizens whose input and recommendations to the Commission majority seem to weigh heavily on their decision-making. The emails, which were sent to all County Commissioners and key staff, contained a laundry list of questions and concerns about the Project and made it apparent that local politics could very likely undermine the Project.


While the majority of technical issues and concerns raised in these emails could have easily been refuted, the volatile political climate in Martin County has forced us to reconsider the continued investment of our time and resources in the Project. From a business perspective, we assessed the uncertainties associated with trying to move forward with the Project in Martin County, and whether it would be more prudent to pursue other development options.

Based on staff's recommendation of denial and the negative tone and substance of these emails, it became clear that a collaborative approach towards a successful outcome for the Project would not be possible.

Accordingly, I am notifying the Commission that we are withdrawing our application and have terminated development activities on the EcoGen Martin Project.

Respectfully Submitted,

U.S. Ecogen Martin, LLC



William F. Quinn
President and CEO

cc:
Vice Chair John Haddox
Commissioner Ed Fielding
Commissioner Sarah Heard
Commissioner Doug Smith
Taryn Kryzda, County Administrator
Michael D. Durham, Esq., County Attorney
Nicki van Vonno, County Growth Management Director