

## Erin Nelson

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**From:** Mary Gillam <gillam@rmi.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 12:18 AM  
**To:** Office  
**Subject:** Comment re proposed Acton/SITLA disconnect

I oppose the disconnection proposed by the Actons and SITLA. Here I address a few of the comments made by Mr. Baird and Mr. Torgerson during the public meeting on August 15.

1. Mr. Baird, the lawyer for the Actons, incorrectly described the parcel they'd like to disconnect as lacking agricultural value because it has no water. Actually many similar parcels throughout the region are used for grazing when water is trucked in.
2. He also said that the town receives only about \$10/year in taxes from the Actons so disconnection wouldn't substantially affect the town budget; conversely, it's also true that it wouldn't create any substantial savings for the Actons. It's disingenuous to believe Mr. Baird's statement that they just don't want to be part of the town.
3. Mr. Baird claimed that the Actons have not told him their plans for the land; however, he said that land can't be kept in the town to keep it from being developed, and that the Actons have the right to decide how they want to develop their land. Therefore it appears that the unstated purpose of the disconnection is to allow for future development without town regulation. The large block of Acton and SITLA land, if disconnected, is likely to be developed into a large commercial and residential community within the next 50 years. Although several people spoke during the public hearing about their love of open land, they may not realize that the potential for future development was one reason this land was included within the town boundary.
4. Mr. Torgerson admitted that SITLA would like to develop its lands within the proposed disconnection area, as well as others within the town boundary that he said SITLA isn't planning to disconnect.
5. Mr. Torgerson exaggerated the extent to which SITLA has honored the wishes of Bluff when developing its land in the region. A case in point is the recent lease on the gravel pit on the Bluff Bench. The permit requires the lessee to develop a mining plan to be approved by the town. This has not happened. Bluff asked SITLA to enforce these provisions but it hasn't. Another example is the proposed major development in Spanish Valley and the disregard for neighboring residents' concerns. I'm not opposed to the solar facility being planned for the Bluff Bench but the impact on runoff and flooding in Bluff will depend on the way the facility is built. Given the previous examples, it's not clear that SITLA will be responsible in the ways it allows development to occur on the lands it proposes to disconnect. It's very likely that when it thinks the market is ripe, SITLA will propose a massive development comparable to the one in Spanish Valley.

Sincerely,  
Mary Gillam