

Addison Solar Farm, LLC

69 College Street
Burlington, Vermont 05401

December 23, 2009

Ferrisburgh Planning Commission
Ferrisburgh Selectboard
P.O. Box 6
3429 Route 7
Ferrisburgh, VT 05456

Addison County Regional Planning Commission
14 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Re: Proposed Addison Solar Farm – Route 7 and Monkton Road, Ferrisburgh
45-Day Notice of Petition to be Filed Under Section 248 at Public Service Board

Dear Commissioners and Selectboard Members:

The following pre-application notice concerning the proposed Addison Solar Farm is being submitted to you in accordance with 30 V.S.A. § 248(f). In addition, a courtesy copy is being mailed to all adjoining landowners on the attached list.

I. Introduction

Addison Solar Farm, LLC (“ASF”) is a Vermont company that is preparing to file a Petition for a Certificate of Public Good with the Vermont Public Service Board (the “PSB” or “Board”). The Petition will request approval to develop and operate a one-Megawatt (MW) solar electric generation project (the “Project”) on a portion of a 16+/- acre tract of land located at the southwest corner of Route 7 & Monkton Road in Ferrisburgh, Vermont. This tract of land is currently undeveloped. The southern slope of the property strategically offers an excellent condition to harvest energy from the sun. This tract abuts Vergennes High School and will allow for substantial educational interaction and learning opportunities.

Last year, the Vermont Legislature passed legislation encouraging in-state renewable energy projects for electricity production through changes to the Vermont Sustainably Priced Energy Development (SPEED) program. Under the SPEED “Standard Offer” program, ASF recently received one of a limited number of project slots to develop a solar energy project. As a result, ASF has begun studies as required by the Vermont Public Service Board’s Section 248 application process. We anticipate filing the Petition for the Certificate of Public Good with the Board on February 8, 2010. We are providing the information in this 45-day advance notice package to the municipal and regional planning commissions, and municipal legislative bodies in accordance with 30 V.S.A. § 248(f) and PSB Rule 5.402.

This letter describes: (1) the Project, plans for its construction and operation, including how equipment and materials will be transported to the site; (2) the expected economic and social benefits of the Project; (3) the preliminary assessment of environmental and aesthetic impacts; (4) the assessment of alternatives; (5) the ASF Project team; (6) the expected Project Petition filing date with the PSB and overall Project schedule; and (7) the rights of the local and regional planning commissions to comment on the Project plans in accordance with PSB Rule 5.402(A).

Included with this letter are a project site map and plan, solar equipment specifications, a schematic drawing and photos of a typical solar installation, and illustrative views of the Project from off-site locations.

II. Project Description and Construction Plans

The Project will consist of a one-MW solar field, with 186+/- ground-mounted solar arrays (each array has multiple individual solar photovoltaic panels). The solar field will occupy approximately 8 acres of the 16+/- acre parcel. Other on-site electrical equipment will be located in a small building, and electrical lines placed underground.

The nameplate capacity of the Project is 1 (one) MW, with each individual solar panel rated at 200 watts. The expected net energy output of the Project (after DC to AC conversion) is 1,200+/- megawatt hours of electricity (MWh) (1,200,000 kWh) per year. This is the equivalent of the annual electricity consumption of roughly 170 homes.

A Project Site Map and Plan are included as Attachment A and illustrate the anticipated location of the Project's components in relation to the surrounding area.

The basic parameters of the site plan include the following working assumptions:

- No permanent access drive throughout solar array is required. Temporary construction entrance and limited length service road;
- No earth moving, grading or excavation other than to install underground conduit. Solar panel support structures to be pile driven and thus very limited earth disturbance required;
- Native soils to remain in place. Site to remain vegetated and able to be routinely mowed;
- The only trees/brush to be removed are those along an interior fence line;
- A 25' setback from class III wetland and 150'+ setback to an off-site stream;
- Property line setbacks of approx. 60' westerly, 25' easterly, and 50' southerly.

Solar Panels and Inverter

The solar panels will be placed on a fixed array mounting system utilizing a support structure holding two rows of solar panel modules. The panels will be tilted at 30 degrees and facing solar south. Current plans are for the support poles to be driven into the ground without concrete foundations, in order to provide an aesthetically pleasing design. The panels will be a minimum of 4 feet off of the ground to allow for proper maintenance of the field. The panels will be a maximum height of 9 feet at the top of their tilted axis. The layout will incorporate appropriate setbacks from the property lines and maintain buffers from any delineated wetlands. The solar panel arrays and all setback and wetland areas are indicated on Attachment A.

In terms of the post-construction condition of the field, all soils on site will remain in place. ASF is also exploring the feasibility of maintaining the fields using sheep, goats, or similar grass grazers, in order to reduce or eliminate the use of power equipment that relies on gasoline and oil.

The Inverter is the power conditioning system that converts the DC current generated by the solar panels into AC current before it is sent to the transmission line of the interconnecting utility, Green Mountain Power. This Inverter will be located at the western edge of the field as shown on the Project Site Map. The Inverter and associated switchgear are housed inside a pre-fabricated structure, approximately 10 x 35 feet in size. All electrical conduits and lines will run underground from the panels to the Inverter to the GMP power poles.

The solar panel, mounting system and inverter schematics and photographs are included as Attachment B.

Access Road, Educational Kiosk and Parking

Access to the solar panels will be from Monkton Road and onto the existing unpaved farm road. No changes or modifications to the existing farm road are anticipated. We are proposing the addition of an informational kiosk open and available to the public with limited drive-in parking space as part of the educational aspect of the Project. Some improvements to this kiosk area are anticipated. The proposed location of the educational kiosk is shown on Attachment A.

Transportation of Project Components

The solar panels, mounting system, conduits and inverter are all of appropriate size, shape and weight to be transported to the site on Route 7 and other state or local roads using standard road delivery methods. No oversize/overweight loads requiring special permits for transportation are expected to be needed.

III. Project Benefits

The Addison Solar Farm represents an attractive energy resource to meet the State's renewable energy and sustainability goals. The Vermont Legislature has

established an aggressive goal – “by the year 2025, to produce 25 percent of the energy consumed within the state through the use of renewable energy sources, particularly from Vermont’s farms and forests.” Through the recently enacted Vermont Energy Act of 2009, owners of a limited number of renewable energy facilities can enter into long-term contracts for the sale of their power, with all of Vermont’s utilities sharing in the purchase of the electricity. This type of system encourages individuals and businesses to invest in new renewable energy systems connected to the State’s electric grid by offering stable, long-term pricing. It is overseen by the Public Service Board.

The more energy produced by solar, the less energy will be needed from electric generation plants that emit air pollutants, thereby helping to reduce acid rain, ozone depletion, health problems from toxic air, and global warming. Solar energy can be stably-priced over the long term. This also benefits the entire region by making electricity prices less dependant on volatile fossil fuel market prices.

The Addison Solar Farm will also contribute positively to the local and State economy through the use of in-state suppliers, contractors, and consultants, and the payment of local and state property taxes.

Finally, ASF is committed to providing an important educational resource concerning the role of a renewable energy project in the working Vermont landscape. This will be accomplished through an on-site informational kiosk, and potential learning partnerships with the adjacent Vergennes Union High School and other area schools.

IV. Preliminary Impact Assessment

Environmental

Based upon the initial review performed by ASF’s outside experts, the Project has been sited to avoid any undue adverse effects on historic/archeological sites, environmental resources, or public health and safety. Key elements include:

- The only sensitive environmental resource identified on-site – a class III wetland – has been avoided and a 25-foot setback has been established in the project design per the recommendations of ASF’s environmental consultant.
- The existing barn will remain on site and continue to be utilized for agricultural purposes or by the solar farm.
- The Project should have no adverse impact on the ability of the town to provide educational services, and as mentioned above is expected to make a positive contribution. Likewise, ASF should require few, if any, municipal services (fire, police, water/sewer).

ASF will provide additional information through the Section 248 Petition.

Aesthetics

See Attachment C.

V. Assessment of Alternatives

The SPEED Standard Offer Program requires a renewable energy project to identify a specific location at the time it applies to participate in the program. ASF identified this site, which is owned by an affiliated entity, and it was selected as a Program participant through a lottery system administered by the PSB. Thus there is no alternative site that ASF is entitled to develop under the Standard Offer Contract. Once the site was selected, ASF and its solar energy and environmental consultants reviewed various configurations within the parcel in order to minimize and avoid environmental, aesthetic, or other impacts while maximizing energy output. The result of that review process is a proposed configuration that utilizes a fixed south orientation of the panels, and locates the solar array in the middle of the parcel away from wetlands.

VI. Project Team

Addison Solar Farm, LLC is an entity associated with Pomerleau Real Estate. We have a great deal of experience developing various kinds of projects in Addison and Chittenden Counties, and through our work have grown to understand and appreciate the needs and interests of the local communities. Our team consists almost entirely of Vermont-based companies, including the solar panel supplier/installer, and the environmental, aesthetics, engineering, and legal consultants.

VII. Expected Petition Filing Date with the PSB and Overall Project Schedule

ASF expects to file its Section 248 Petition and supporting materials with the PSB soon after the 45-day notice period expires, but no sooner than February 8, 2010.

Once the Section 248 Petition is filed, ASF expects to request the Board to schedule any hearings and other necessary steps in the proceedings in time to render a decision by early summer 2010. This schedule will allow the Project to be constructed by the end of 2010, which is necessary in order to qualify for the Vermont solar tax credit. In the absence of this credit, it is extremely unlikely that this Project (or other similar solar projects, for that matter) can be financed and constructed.

VIII. Local and regional planning commissions comments to the PSB

For your information, the Public Service Board has published a "Citizens Guide to the Vermont Public Service Board's Section 248 Process," available on the Board's website at http://psb.vermont.gov/sites/psb/files/publications/Citizens_Guide_to_248.pdf.

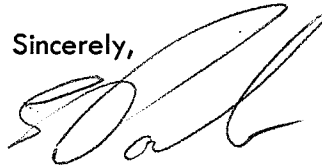
Under state statute – Section 248(f) of Title 30 – the town and regional planning commissions “shall make recommendations, if any, to the Public Service Board and to the petitioner at least 7 days prior to filing of the petition with the Public Service Board.” In addition, the planning commissions are entitled to provide revised recommendations “within 45 days of the date on which petitioner has filed a petition with the Board if the petition contains new or more detailed information that was not previously included in the petitioner’s filing with the municipal and regional planning commissions pursuant to Section 248(f).” See Board Rule 5.402(A)(2).

As noted above, the expected filing date of ASF’s Petition is February 8, 2010.

Closing Remarks

Addison Solar Farm looks forward to working with the Town, Regional Planning Commission, and other interested parties on permitting and developing this important renewable energy project, which will provide economic, environmental, and energy benefits to the town, county, and State. Please let us know if you would like further information on the Project, and whether you would like to meet and discuss the issues in greater detail.

Sincerely,



Ernest Pomerleau, Member
Addison Solar Farm, LLC
(802) 863-8217
epomerleau@vermontrealestate.com

Encls.

cc: Adjoining Landowners (see attached list)
Vermont Public Service Board
Vermont Department of Public Service
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Attachment A – Site Plan and Map
Attachment B – Solar panel, mounting system and inverter schematics and photographs
Attachment C – Aesthetics Assessment and figures
Attachment D – Addison Solar Farm flyer