CS Energy

Dolan Solar

Community Engagement Plan

Town of Fort Edward, Washington County, New York

Prepared By:

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Abbreviations

AC	Alternating Current
CEP	Community Engagement Plan
CES	Clean Energy Standard
CLCPA	Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act
DC	Direct Current
EPC	Engineering Procurement and Construction
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
GW	Gigawatt
kV	Kilovolt
MW	Megawatt
NYCRR	New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations
NYSDAM	New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
NYISO	New York State Independent System Operator
NYPA	New York Power Authority
NYS	New York State
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSERDA	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
NYSOPRHP	New York State Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation
NYSHPO	New York State Historic Preservation Office
PILOT	Payment In Lieu Of Taxes
PV	Photovoltaic
REC	Renewable Energy Credits
RFP	Request For Proposals
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Introduction

Dolan Solar, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of CS Energy, LLC ("CS Energy") is proposing to construct and operate a 20 MW-ac photovoltaic single-axis tracking solar energy generation facility (the project) in the Town of Fort Edward, Washington County, New York. CS Energy has extensive experience developing, designing, and constructing solar energy generation facilities in New York and neighboring states.

This Community Engagement Plan (Plan) is intended to provide general guidelines that the project will follow in the development process for engagement with project stakeholders. It demonstrates the types of public outreach efforts CS Energy has undertaken and expects to undertake to both properly inform community stakeholders about the project and seek feedback that may be relevant to the projects continued development process. CS Energy has and will continue to be committed to engaging with host communities and meeting or going beyond minimum requirements for community engagement. CS Energy understands the importance of establishing relationships with host communities and addressing their concerns, and this is a core principal of our development strategy.

Company Background

Company Profile

CS Energy is a fully integrated solar and energy storage company, with over 2.0 GW of installed operating solar across 13 states. In addition to a robust solar resume, CS Energy is a highly bankable company, with over $200 million in annual revenues and over $200 million of bonding capacity. CS Energy provides end-to-end solutions for our projects, with in-house development, permitting, financing, engineering, construction, and operations expertise. CS Energy prides itself in its ability to perform all aspects of a solar project in-house. From the earliest phases of a project, including real estate negotiations and permitting, all the way through to financing, construction, and operations, CS Energy provides industry leading expertise to ensure projects are built safely, efficiently, and with minimal impacts.

American Securities, LLC, the majority owner of CS Energy, is a leading private equity firm with approximately $45 billion in committed capital. Headquartered in New York, American Securities is a privately held firm with over 30 years of experience in private equity. Currently, American Securities has 26 investments and operates in over 55 countries, with a total revenue of $45 billion. American Securities prioritizes environmental, social and governance matters, seeking to minimize adverse environmental or societal impacts on individuals' communities or the planet.

Development Experience

CS Energy has established expertise in all aspects of the development, construction, and operation of greenfield solar projects. CS Energy understands the nuances associated with these projects and the complexities of zoning and regulatory processes. Additionally, the company has a detailed understanding of all other aspects of solar project development in New York, including policy expertise, in depth knowledge of permitting requirements, the NYISO interconnection process, and deep engineering and construction expertise. CS Energy has significant experience in New York State with over 500 MW of solar installed, and a further 200 MW of solar under construction. To support its growth in New York, CS Energy opened a regional office in Albany in 2020, a testament to the company's commitment to the New York solar and energy storage markets. CS Energy employs over 30 full time salaried employees in New York State and is growing its in-state team on a monthly basis. Additionally, CS Energy employs a robust construction labor force both on a permanent and temporary basis to support the construction of its projects in the field.

The company's aim is to provide a truly turnkey development solution, which distinguishes CS Energy from others in the marketplace. CS Energy controls the entire process form early-stage development through construction and commercial operations. This means that project stakeholders have one point of contact through development of the project, ensuring continuity and follow through on relationships with and obligations to the community.

Project Siting and Location

Siting a solar project is a complex endeavor which involves evaluating a myriad of factors to ensure a specific location will support responsibly developed, low impact and cost-effective projects. Major factors in selecting a suitable site include adequate interconnection capacity on the local electrical transmission grid, low impacts to environmental and cultural resource constraints, availability of suitable land for the construction of solar panels, and reasonable compatibility with the local community.

Project Description

Project Summary

The Dolan Solar Project is a proposed 20 MW-ac photovoltaic single-axis tracker solar power generation project. It is currently in late-stage development and is expected to enter construction in late 2024. It will

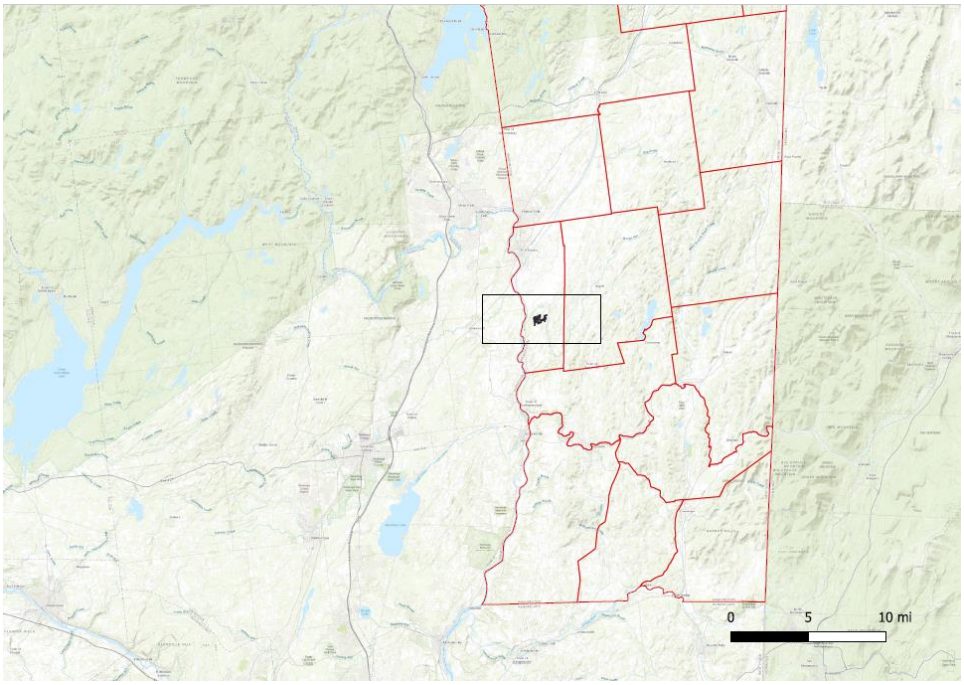
produce power for up to 40 years and is expected to generate enough electricity each year to meet the typical electrical consumption of approximately 4,000 New York homes. Current plans call for the project to lease or purchase approximately 130 acres across portions of 5 properties in the area.

The Dolan Solar Project is in the Town of Fort Edward, in Washington County, NY. The project will be sited on a mix of agricultural, forested, and shrubland to recognize and balance the competing concerns and interests specific to each cover type. Low density rural residential development and farms are interspersed throughout the project area. The project is located entirely within the Agricultural/ Residential (R-AG) zoning district in the Town of Fort Edward. The project is proposed to be built just north of Patterson Rd, south of Cary Rd, east of Empire State Trail, and largely west of Woodard Rd. There is a small portion of the Project Site on the eastern side of Woodard Rd. The site will be accessed from Patterson Rd and Woodard Rd. The following pages includes an overview of the project location with respect to the and county and local area (**Figure 1**).

The project's interconnection application was received by NYISO on May 6th, 2019 and has been assigned the NYISO queue position of Q# 833. The project has completed all of the applicable interconnection studies with NYISO, including the System Impact Study, which was received in March 2020, and the Facilities Study, which was received in January, 2021. The Project executed a Small Generator Interconnection Agreement with NYISO and National Grid on July 27, 2022. Dolan Solar proposes to connect to the Mohican Battenkill 115 kV line that runs through the project site between the Mohican and Battenkill Substations. The project interconnection will include a collector substation at the point of interconnection, in the middle of the project site, west of Woodard Rd.

The Project received a SEQRA negative declaration on October 27th, 2021 and a Site Plan Approval from the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board on November 10th, 2021. As an established EPC company, CS Energy will carry out construction of the facility. The facility will consist of PV modules on single axis tracking structures that follow the sun throughout the day, inverters which convert direct current to alternating current, electrical collection systems between the panel arrays, and a new substation to deliver power to the transmission line. Complementary facility areas will include access roads, fencing, stormwater management systems, and temporary construction areas for equipment.

Figure 1: General location of the Dolan Solar Project



Project Schedule

The Dolan Solar project has been under development since 2019 and is expected to go under construction in late 2024 and be operating by 2026. A high-level representation of the expected project schedule is included below.

Project Task/Milestone	Start Date	Completion Date
Landowner outreach and negotiations	Q2 2019	Q4 2022
Town outreach and communication	Q2 2019	Ongoing
NYISO/National Grid Interconnection Studies	Q4 2019	Completed Q3 2022
On site environmental studies and surveys	Fall 2021	Completed
Neighbor and community outreach and communication	Fall 2021	Ongoing through life of project
Ministerial Permits (building permit, SPDES)	Q1 2024	Q3 2024
Project Construction	Q3 2024	Q4 2025

Permitting

The Dolan Solar project pursued permitting locally in the Town of Fort Edward, with the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board being the lead agency in the Site Plan Review Process. The Project submitted an initial Site Plan Review Application and Full SEQR Environmental Assessment Form, and all supporting materials on October 12, 2021. An Area Variance Application was initially submitted on July 21, 2021 and approved on July 29, 2021. Throughout the review process, project representatives attended several Planning Board meetings to address comments and feedback. The SEQR process allows the town to identify and evaluate all potential impacts the project may have on the environment and the community. The project received its initial negative declaration and site plan approval on November 10, 2021, which was valid for one year. Shortly after, the project received an area variance. Due to economic factors deriving from supply issues triggered by the COVID pandemic, CS Energy sought an extension to its initial site plan approval. On October 26, 2022, the site plan extension was granted by the TOFE Planning Board, until March 31, 2024. Throughout 2023, landowner extension negotiations were ongoing to allow for the initial term to be extended. Following these negotiations, project made efforts to shift panel locations to eliminate panels from two parcels that were formerly associated with the project. Based on this project layout revision, the project effectively consolidated its footprint and reduced its environmental impact. Following the revision, steps were taken to pursue a site plan application revision. The TOFE Planning Board received the revised site plan and supporting permit materials in Fall of 2023 and is in the process of reviewing. It is anticipated, based on feedback from the Planning Board, that the projects revised site plan will receive site plan approval in February, 2024.

The project has been designed by a third-party engineering firm with input and support from CS Energy's internal engineering team. It has been designed to avoid impacts to water bodies, including streams and wetlands, thereby eliminating the need for wetland permits from the NYSDEC or the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE). The project will limit the scope and timing of tree clearing operations and other construction activities in order to minimize impacts to rare, threatened or endangered species. The project will obtain access permits, building and electrical permits, a final Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and any additional ministerial permits that may be required.

The project consulted with NYSDEC to assess the potential presence of endangered or threatened species on site. Through that consultation, NYSDEC determined that a Grassland Breeding Bird survey

and Wintering Raptor Survey would be necessary to assess the presence of the species on site. Surveys were conducted in the winter of 2021-2022 to assess use of the site by winter raptors and in the spring of 2022 to determine if state-listed species were utilizing the site during the breeding season. The results of these surveys were provided to NYSDEC. The target species was identified on site, and based on this take, land near the project was identified and pursued for mitigation. The land for the mitigation is under control via an option agreement. Dolan received an Incidental Take Permit on January 11, 2024 from the NYSDEC.

Based on the results of these surveys, NYSDEC personnel determined that the proposed Dolan Solar Project would impact occupied northern harrier winter habitat. No other listed species would be impacted by the project. Breeding bird surveys did not identify any listed species utilizing the site. The Dolan Solar Project has completed an on-site wetland delineation to provide detailed feedback as to the specific locations of wetlands on the project area, and a Phase 1A/1B archeological survey to locate potential sites of archeological sensitivity.

The Dolan Solar Project has been designed specifically to encourage the long-term strength and viability of the underlying agricultural resource and to ensure there is no significant impact to agricultural and rural character of the area. The site will be planted with low-growth native plant species wherever the existing vegetation has been disturbed. These deep-rooted plants improve soil with organic matter which allows for microorganisms and soil fauna to recover, and provide habitat for various birds, mammals, and other species. The project site will be able to be restored to its current agricultural use at the end of the project life, effectively preserving the site's agricultural heritage for the long-term in ways that other more permanent development would not. This restoration commitment will be secured by long-term decommissioning and restoration bonds that will be posted for the benefit of the host municipalities.

CLCPA Goals

CS Energy recognizes the long-term impacts of environmental inequities on low-income and minority communities and consistently seeks to support these communities. In an effort to more effectively carry out these efforts, CS Energy has identified potential Disadvantaged Communities near the project location and potential barriers to information access to ensure that, if necessary, information is provided in a language and format that is accessible to all. The direct potential economic benefits to disadvantaged communities has been provided in this application within the Bid Data Form.

The nearest disadvantaged community to the Dolan Solar Project, according to the NYSERDA disadvantaged community mapper is 5.5 miles away in Hudson Falls. The Project's largest potential impact on disadvantaged communities will be the use of construction labor that could potentially include members of this community. CS Energy has always and will continue to use union labor for the construction of their projects and has good relationships with Luina and IBEW. While the Project hopes that disadvantaged community members will be members of the construction team, the fluidity of local labor forces makes it difficult to commit to a concrete contribution to these communities.

Project Benefits

Project Construction Benefits

Development of the Dolan Solar project will include a significant investment in regionally based, full-time and contract employees. Surveying and Engineering firms have supported the field studies necessary to prepare the project's initial design and permit applications. Additionally, staff from TOVIP Energy, a landowner relations company, have supported landowner engagement throughout the development period.

The most significant employment and economic impacts associated with a solar project occur during the construction phase. CS Energy anticipates creating over 100 construction jobs to build the facility. CS Energy will hire local laborers and electricians to the greatest extent practicable for construction and installation of the solar arrays. Work on a solar array includes tree clearing and site preparation, fencing and access road installation, foundation, racking and module installation, electrical wiring and commissioning. Additionally, highly skilled electricians and technicians are hired to construct the utility interconnection facilities and performance test the facility. As New York's solar market has grown, the number of in-state firms and personnel that can support this type of construction has also expanded. As such, many of these workers are expected to be hired in-state. These workers will also provide indirect benefits to the local community through food and lodging purchases throughout the construction period.

Additionally, during the construction phase, the project will purchase or rent tools and equipment, construction trailers, fuel, gravel, and associated items from local and regional businesses.

Project Operational Benefits

Over the operational life of the project, Dolan Solar will contribute significantly to the local economy and the local taxing jurisdictions. Local landowners will receive economic benefit through lease payments which will also yield both direct and indirect contributions to the community., The project will contribute significantly to the revenues of the local taxing jurisdictions through a PILOT agreement negotiated with the town.

Dolan Solar will directly support up to 2 full-time equivalent, high-quality jobs over the life of the project. Care for the project's landscaping improvements, habitat features, and grasses planted beneath the solar panels will be performed by local ground maintenance contractors. The project will also employ solar technicians to perform routine inspections, maintenance, and repairs of the solar energy generating equipment and to respond to unexpected interruptions in service. The project will be managed by a project or asset manager who will be responsible for long-term compliance with permits, lease agreements, and interconnection agreements, and will manage ongoing relationships in the local community.

Solar power is a safe and renewable form of energy generation. Unlike fossil fuel generated electricity, solar power does not emit pollutants while in operation. By replacing energy sources that produce air pollution, solar provides public health and climate benefits. The Dolan Solar Project is participating in the 2023 NYSERDA Solicitation for LSR which will support New York State's clean energy goals, and ultimately contribute to the fight against climate change, a significant existential threat to local and global agricultural production.

Solar provides public health benefits by replacing energy sources that produce air pollution and other climate change impacts. Solar facilities are, largely, quiet and produce no vibration. The panels that will be used do not contain hazardous materials and pose no risk of leaching throughout the project life. Setbacks and tree screening buffers have been implemented to minimize the visual impacts on the community and setting in the area and to aid in the integration of the project with the natural landscape.

Property Taxes and Host Community Agreements

One of the most tangible and lasting economic benefits to local jurisdictions from a solar power generation facility development are property tax payments. The Dolan Solar Project intends to enter into a Payment

in Lieu of Taxes Agreement which will provide payments to the Town of Fort Edward and will anticipates paying taxes on the rolls to all other taxing jurisdictions.

Taxing Jurisdiction	RPTL Status
Washington County	Opted Out
Town of Fort Edward	Opted In
Hudson Falls Central School District	Opted In
Argyle Central School District	Opted In

Authorities and Stakeholders

CS Energy has worked and will continue to work directly with both participating landowners, and project neighbors, those located adjacent to the project location, to ensure concerns are heard and addressed through project design and mitigation efforts.

Agencies and organizations with direct permitting and oversight responsibilities will be engaged throughout the course of the project permitting process. CS Energy typically engages directly with authorities having jurisdiction for permits while seeking support from engineering and land development consultants on a case-by-case basis. A list of the Authority Having Jurisdictions for the project and the relevant contacts are listed below:

Authority Having Jurisdiction	Contact Title	Contact Name	Contact Information	Tenure (if applicable
Washington County	County Administrator	Melissa Fitch	(518)-746-2102	N/A
Washington-Warren County IDA	Director of Economic Development	Laura Oswald	518-746-2291 loswald@washingtoncountynyu.gov	N/A

Town of Fort Edward	Town Supervisor	Tim Fisher	(518)-760-3066 supervisor@fortedward.net	Term expires 12/31/2027
Town of Fort Edward Planning Board	Acting Chair	Valerie Ingersoll	(518) 955-2533 vsetay@gmail.com	
Argyle Central School District	Superintendent	Jim Bennefield (Previously Mark Bessen)	(518) 638-8243 bennefield_j@argylecsd.org	N/A
Hudson Falls Central School District	Superintendent	Daniel Ward	(518) 681-4124 dward@hfcsd	N/A

Above and beyond the public process afforded by the project's requisite permits, CS Energy intends to build on the success of its public engagement to date, utilizing multiple avenues to encourage stakeholder participation. CS Energy finds that community meetings outside of the regulated public hearing process can be a better forum for open dialogue. See below in this document for a more detailed explanation of the public engagement process. A list of relevant agencies, representatives and stakeholders that CS Energy anticipates being involved in the project throughout the rest of the development period are identified below:

State and Federal Agencies	Project Role
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets	Consultation Agency
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYSDEC, Region 5	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority	Direct Oversight
NYS Department of Economic Development	Consultation Agency
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation	Consultation Agency
NYS Department of Public Services	Consultation Agency
NYS Department of State Office Planning and Development	Consultation Agency

NYS Department of Transportation	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYS Independent Service Operator	Direct Oversight
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Direct Oversight
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Rural Developments	Consultation Agency
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	Consultation Agency
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Direct Oversight
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Direct Permitting Oversight
National Telecommunication and Information Administration	Consultation Agency
United States Senator Chuck Schumer	Area Legislator
United States Senator Kirsten Gillibrand	Area Legislator
United States House of Representatives, Tom Reed, 23rd District	Area Legislator
NY State Senate, Betty Little	Area Legislator
NY State Assembly, Carrie Woerner, or Successor, 113th, District	Area Legislator
Local Agencies and Governments	
Town of Fort Edward Town Clerk, Aimee Mahoney	Oversight
Town of Fort Edward Planning Board	Building Permitting and Oversight
Town of Fort Edward Town Board	Oversight
Town of Fort Edward Town Supervisor, Timothy Fisher	Oversight
Washington-Warren County IDA	Oversight
Host Municipalities and School Districts	
Washington County	Oversight
Town of Fort Edward	Possible PILOT, Oversight
Hudson Falls Central School District	Possible PILOT
Argyle Central School District	Possible PILOT

Utility and Highway Departments	
Washington County Highway Association	Direct Permitting Oversight
National Grid	Transmission Owner
New York Power Authority	Interconnection
Additional Stakeholders	
Southern Adirondack Audubon Society	Community Stakeholder
Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club	Community Stakeholder
Audubon Society of the Capitol Region	Community Stakeholder
Agricultural Stewardship Association	Community Stakeholder
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Washington County	Community Stakeholder
Washington County Economic Development	Community Stakeholder
Town of Fort Edward Fire Department	First Responders
Town of Fort Edward Police Department	First Responders

Community Engagement Timeline

CS Energy intends to follow our community engagement timeline, provided below, to ensure full engagement and transparency with the community and its stakeholders throughout the development lifecycle of the project. The following table of ongoing outreach actions identifies both the specific activities that are required under ORES and the additional commitments CS Energy will make to foster strong relationships with host communities.

Outreach Activity	Start Date	Duration	Frequency
Comments and Inquiries	Summer 2021	years	Continuous
Town Supervisor Meetings	Fall 2020	4 years	Continuous
Initial Town Board Meetings	Spring 2021	3 years	Continuous

Neighbor and Community Outreach	Summer 2021	3 years	Continuous

Proposed Public Engagement

Community Engagement Activities to Date

CS Energy began exploring the Washington County area as a possible location for a solar project in 2019. The first landowner was signed up in late 2019, and the 5 total participating parcels in the current Project design are all under option agreements and provide sufficient acreage for a 160 MW system.

CS Energy's development approach involves early and frequent communication with community representatives. In the pre-development phase, CS Energy contacted local officials to introduce a project concept, provide basic facts regarding solar technology, project construction and project operation, and to discuss the local permitting context. A key goal of this initial consultation is to identify potential fatal flaws for the project or sensitivities or concerns that should help to guide the development of the project. As hands-on developers, the CS Energy team serve as reliable project representatives with direct agency over project decision-making and whom stakeholders can contact specific questions or comments about the project as they arise.

Central to its belief that strong relationships are vital to project success, CS Energy has made dozens of trips to the area and has had multiple substantive conversations with key stakeholders in the community, specifically with project neighbors. Employees of CS Energy are on a first name basis with town and county leaders and the company's presence in town has been noted and applauded by residents and stakeholders alike.

To that end, CS Energy started targeted outreach to project neighbors in 2022 to inform them of the project, field questions and address any initial concerns.

Previously, CS Energy staff participated in a panel discussion lead by the Cornell Cooperative Extension on July 25, 2019, in Easton, Washington County, NY. The purpose of the meeting was to provide general information for the public on solar projects and their interaction with agricultural communities. Landowners leasing property, local and county officials, and agricultural business owners participated in this event and provided a wide variety of information and views on solar and its role in that community.

Outreach with Town and County Officials

In conjunction with initial landowner outreach, CS Energy began contacting local officials regarding the potential for a large scale solar project including the following meetings and correspondence:

- On June 12, 2019, representatives from CS Energy attended the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board Public Hearing & Regular Meeting to inform the Town about the development of Dolan Solar, and the intent to submit an application in the coming years. Questions were answered about interconnection, bonding, and a PILOT.
- On March 11, 2020, representatives for Dolan Solar attended the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board and Regular Town Meeting to provide an update on the project's development activities. Questions were answered about the duration of construction, interconnection, and tree clearing, among other solar related topics.
- On March 8th, 2021, representatives for Dolan Solar attended the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board and Town Board Meeting to give a presentation on the status of the Project useful information on utility scale solar projects.
- The Dolan Solar Project applied for Site Plan Approval with the Town of Fort Edward and appeared before the Planning Board on July 14th, 2021. At this meeting, the Planning Board voted to list the Project as a Type II Action under SEQRA and circulate notice of intent to act as Lead Agency. The Planning Board also voted to refer the project to the Town ZBA and endorse the project's requests for rear and side yard area variances.
- The Project applied for area variances and appeared before the ZBA on July 29th, 2021. The Zoning Board of Appeals provided a conditional approval of all requested area variances contingent on a referral to the County Planning Agency.
- CS Energy representatives attended the Town of Fort Edward Planning Board on September 8th, 2021, where the Planning Board declared itself lead agency. The Planning Board also acknowledged the project application was nearly complete and agreed to schedule a public hearing for the project on 10/27/21.
- The Town of Fort Edward Planning Board held a public hearing for the Dolan Solar Project on October 27th, 2021. There was no public comment.
- Representatives for the Dolan Solar Project attended the Fort Edward Planning Board meeting on November 10th, 2021 where the project was given a conditional Site Plan Approval,

- The Project held a meeting with both school districts mentioned above and representatives from the Town of Fort Edward on May 25th, 2022 to discuss a PILOT.
- On October 26, 2022, representatives from the Project presented a revised Project design to the Planning Board showing reduced impacts compared to what was previously approved and requested an extension of the Site Plan Approval through March 31st, 2024. The Planning Board deemed that the up updated design was consistent with the design previously considered in 2021 and granted the extension.
- On August 9th, 2023, representatives for Dolan Solar attended the Fort Edward Planning Board and gave updated project information. The Planning Board deemed that it is appropriate to re-evaluate the Project under SEQRA and issue an amended Site Plan Approval reflecting the new layout. The Applicant is in the process of getting this approval.
- The Applicant attended Planning Board meetings on January 10, 2024, and January 24, 2024 to discuss updated Project Submittals. 2024 meeting minutes are not yet available on the Town of Fort Edward website so they have not been included in this application.

Construction

CS Energy acts as both developer and EPC contractor, and therefore the transition from development to construction phases for community engagement will be seamless. As the project nears construction, new members of CS Energy's construction team will be introduced to the community and project stakeholders. However, the development team will continue to be regularly involved in the project to ensure continuity of relationships and project obligations. Construction is expected to start in late 2024 or early 2025 and last between 18 and 24 months. Overall, the project is expected to generate over 100 construction jobs. CS Energy will make all reasonable efforts to hire as many construction jobs from local labor pools as possible. These efforts include outreach with local workforce development organizations and leaders to provide training, internships, and skills development for local leaders. It is the hope that through these efforts, CS Energy will be able to increase the labor pool in the local disadvantaged communities prior to the start of construction.

Operation

Once the project enters commercial operation, the regularity of activity on the project or any project updates will reduce significantly. That said, it is still important for information about the project to remain accessible, and for lines of communication between local stakeholders and the project's operations and

maintenance team to remain open. To that end, CS Energy will still function as a point of contact for the first few years of project operation to ensure mitigation measures have been successfully implemented and concerns regarding the project from local community members and town officials can be effectively address. Appropriate contact information, including emergency contact information, to be posted at the project site.

Public Permitting Engagement

Common Public Concerns

Because projects like Dolan Solar have large footprints, the surrounding communities have justifiable concerns. Specific concerns that the community adjacent to the project has brought to our attention include viewshed concerns, loss of agricultural land, decommissioning of the project, the safety of the panels and potential property value impacts. CS Energy has taken an active role in community engagement and will continue to meet landowners, neighbors, and concerned residents to find mutually beneficial solutions to the concerning aspects of solar projects. To specifically address a few of the concerns that have been brought up through community meetings or direct meetings with community members, CS has been working to identify the means to host sheep on the site to allow for an agricultural use to continue throughout the project area. Additionally, CS has met directly with property owners adjacent to the project regarding options for viewshed mitigation or other potential options available to mitigate the potential impacts. CS has held meetings with the Fort Edward Fire Department and will be carrying out safety trainings prior to construction and throughout operations. The project site was reviewed by the fire department to determine locations where pass by and turnarounds would aid in effective access to the project site.

CS Energy prides itself on its strong partnerships with local municipalities and key stakeholders within the community. It is because of these partnerships that CS Energy has been able to build so many successful projects in New York State. The company has been in ongoing contact with the Town of Fort Edward in order to stay informed of concerns that are being brought by residents. CS Energy has participated in several Town Board Meetings and held meetings for the relevant agencies, local fire departments, and community members to inform the public of the project's progress and hear and address project concerns. Moving forward, the company intends to complete further outreach to project neighbors and build a question and comment structure to ensure that anyone who has concerns can raise them.

A list of some common concerns and general solutions that CS Energy has implemented for previous projects and intends to implement for the Dolan Solar Project include the following:

Viewshed and Buffer zones

- **Concern**
  - Viewshed concerns have been raised by neighbors to the project, by various Town Officials, and by host landowners that are concerned with their or their neighbors' view of the project. Community members want to be sure that adequate buffers are put in place to mitigate viewshed concerns.
- **Solution**
  - CS Energy has conducted a visual analysis, to determine viewsheds of concern. The company has also meet with affected parties to determine the best course of action to mitigate concerns. Feedback from the public and project neighbors has been incorporated into the viewshed mitigation plan that is currently in place. CS Energy has latitude on where landscaping buffers can be planted and what type of buffer should be used, and the company has used and will continue to use this flexibility to find mutually agreeable solutions.

Decommissioning

- **Concern**
  - Host communities and project neighbors have expressed concern over decommissioning and concerns over the potential that a defunct project may not be removed following the end of the project's life have been brought to our attention.
- **Solution**
  - The Fort Edward Local Law requires a robust plan for decommissioning. Throughout the application process, the Planning Board requested several revisions to ensure that the Town was fully protected, in the unlikely scenario that decommissioning could not be carried out by the project owner. The project area will be remediated in accordance with the decommissioning plan and any applicable regulations. To ensure the project is decommissioned regardless of potential long-term changes, the project will establish a

bond or letter of credit with the local municipalities in an amount sufficient to decommission the project. The amount of the decommissioning bond will be established by the Fort Edward Town Board, and will be adjusted periodically during the operational life of the project. This bond will be used by the municipality in the unlikely event that the company cannot complete its own decommissioning as written in its decommissioning plan.

Taxes

- **Concern**
  - Many residents are concerned with how this project will be taxed and have concerns that the project won't be paying its "fair share".
- **Solution**
  - Taxation of renewable energy projects is a complicated issue and requires significant engagement with local stakeholders to ensure all parties are on the same page. This project will enter into a PILOT agreement which will represent a portion of the property tax payments the project will make. The project will pay the remainder of the property taxes to the relevant jurisdictions which are not included in this PILOT. This agreement is meant to establish long term certainty and confidence for budgeting purposes for both the project and the local municipalities. The project will also be paying special district taxes directly based on the real property assessment of the project.

Agriculture Loss

- **Concern**
  - Many residents of rural New York are concerned that solar projects are sited on agricultural land. They are worried that these projects will cause irreparable damage to local farmland.
- **Solution**
  - Open land is necessary for any large-scale solar project. However, Hawthorn Solar will be intentionally sited on a mix of agricultural, forest, and scrubland to balance the impacts of the project across land cover types. Further, solar projects are not permanent structures and have little long-term effect on the underlying land or soil. When the project has reached the end of its life, the land can easily be converted back into agricultural land.

Fires and Safety

- **Concern**
  - Some residents are worried about the potential fire hazard of solar projects and the ability of the local fire department to handle this hazard.
- **Solution**
  - Large-scale solar projects present little fire and safety risk. Small electrical fires may occur in some of the equipment, but these are generally self-contained and burn themselves out. However, CS Energy will conduct a safety training to educate local first responders on safety procedures, energy cut-off locations, and electrical risk.

Public Input

CS Energy has found that the best way to assuage community concerns is to address them transparently and early in the process. It is for this reason that the company has opened many pathways to communication. CS Energy has solicited feedback from the public using several modalities. The first is direct outreach to key stakeholders. Through mailers to neighbors and conversations with local leaders, CS Energy has been in contact with those who are most affected by the project.

Due to the lengthy interconnection study process for large-scale solar projects, CS Energy has found that regular updates at Town Board and Planning Board meetings are helpful in providing up to date information on projects. In addition, community meetings outside of the regulated public hearing process ensure there are multiple means of communicating with and soliciting feedback from interested parties. Additionally, CS Energy staff will continue to engage with the Town of Fort Edward to provide more details on the project and discuss a PILOT.

Project Contact

Project contact's will be available via email and phone Monday - Friday during normal business hours:

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