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CS Energy

Yellow Barn Solar Community Engagement Plan

Towns of Lansing and Groton, Tomkins County, New York

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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
HCA	Host Community Agreement
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
ORES	Office of Renewable Energy Siting
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

Yellow Barn Solar, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of CS Energy, LLC (“CS Energy”) is proposing to construct and operate a 160 MW-ac photovoltaic single-axis tracking solar energy generation facility (the project) in the Towns of Lansing and Groton, Tompkins 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 an overview of 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. Under the previous governing statutes, specific requirements were provided to ensure adequate public engagement was carried out by the project for the host community and other interested parties and project stakeholders. Under new governing regulations for large scale projects, specific requirements for public outreach and engagement are more limited, however, 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 principle of our development strategy.

Company Background

Company Profile

CS Energy is a fully integrated solar and energy storage company, with over 2 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 from 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 Yellow Barn Project is a proposed 160 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 or early 2025. 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 36,000 New York homes. Current plans call for the project to lease or purchase approximately 750 acres across portions of 24 properties in the area.

The Yellow Barn Solar Project is in the Towns of Lansing and Groton, in Tompkins 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 (AG) zoning district in the Town of Lansing and entirely within the Rural Agricultural (RA) zoning district in the Town of Groton. The project is located along Pleasant Valley Road, east of Van Ostrand Road and west of Smith Road. Current estimates show that approximately 754 acres will be necessary for the project area. Of this, approximately 75% of the project area will be located in Groton, with the remainder in Lansing. The following pages includes an overview of the project location with respect to the state and county (**Figure 1**) and with respect to the local area (**Figure 2**).

The project's interconnection application was submitted on April 30th, 2020, and has been assigned the NYISO queue position of Q# 1090. The project has completed its System Reliability Impact Study (SRIS) for generation interconnection by the NYISO and the affected Electrical Transmission Owner, New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG). The Project entered into the 2023 Class Year Study in early 2023 and anticipates completion of this in late 2024. Yellow Barn Solar proposes to connect to the Cayuga and Etna 115 kV line that runs through the project site between the Milliken/Cayuga and Etna Substations. At the point of interconnection there will be a substation, including a pad-mounted switchgear, transformer, and breaker equipment.

The Project submitted a 94-c application to the Office of Renewable Energy Siting on November 3rd, 2023. Once the project has obtained an ORES permit, CS Energy, as an established EPC company, 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: State and county location of Yellow Barn Project

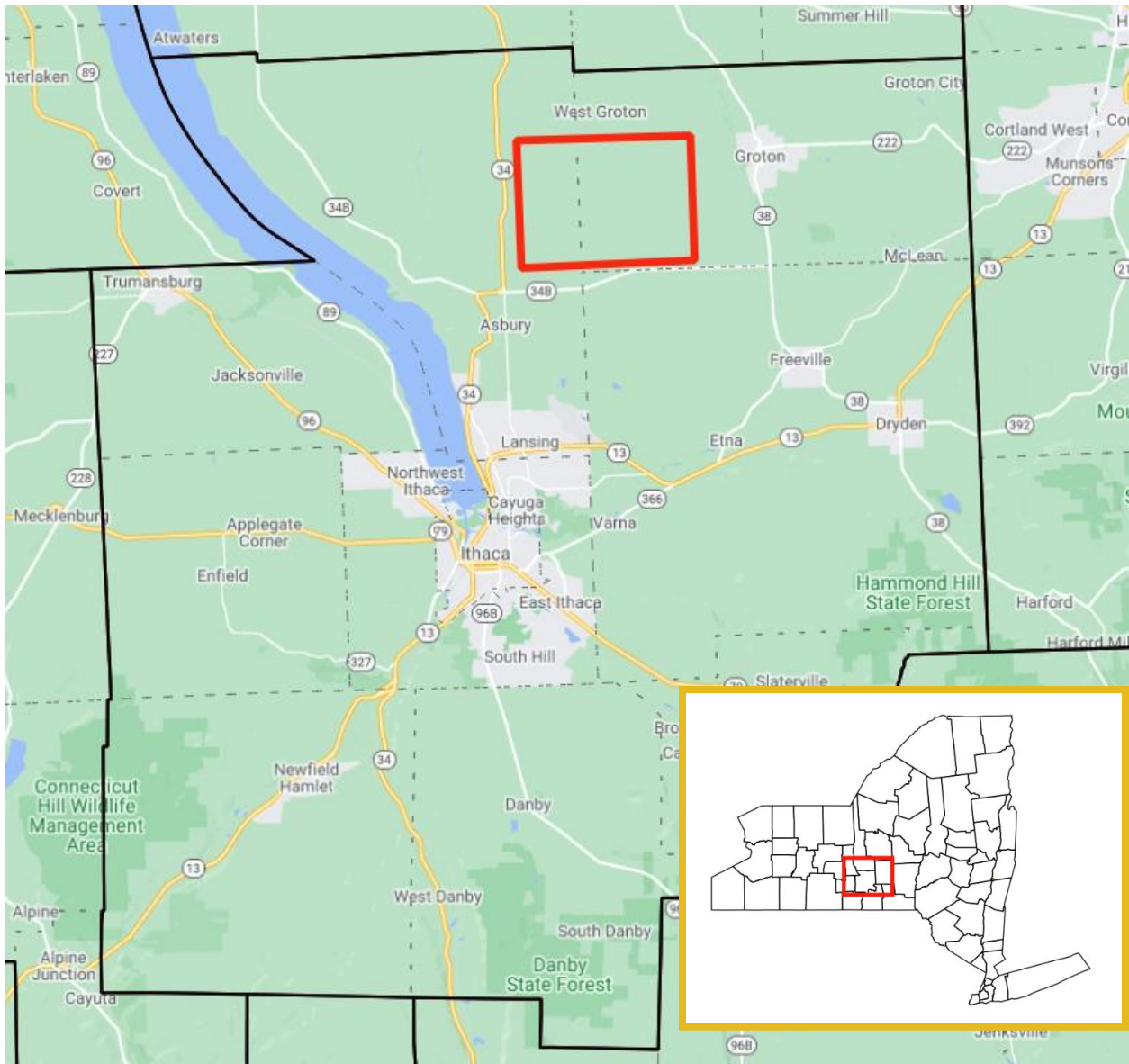
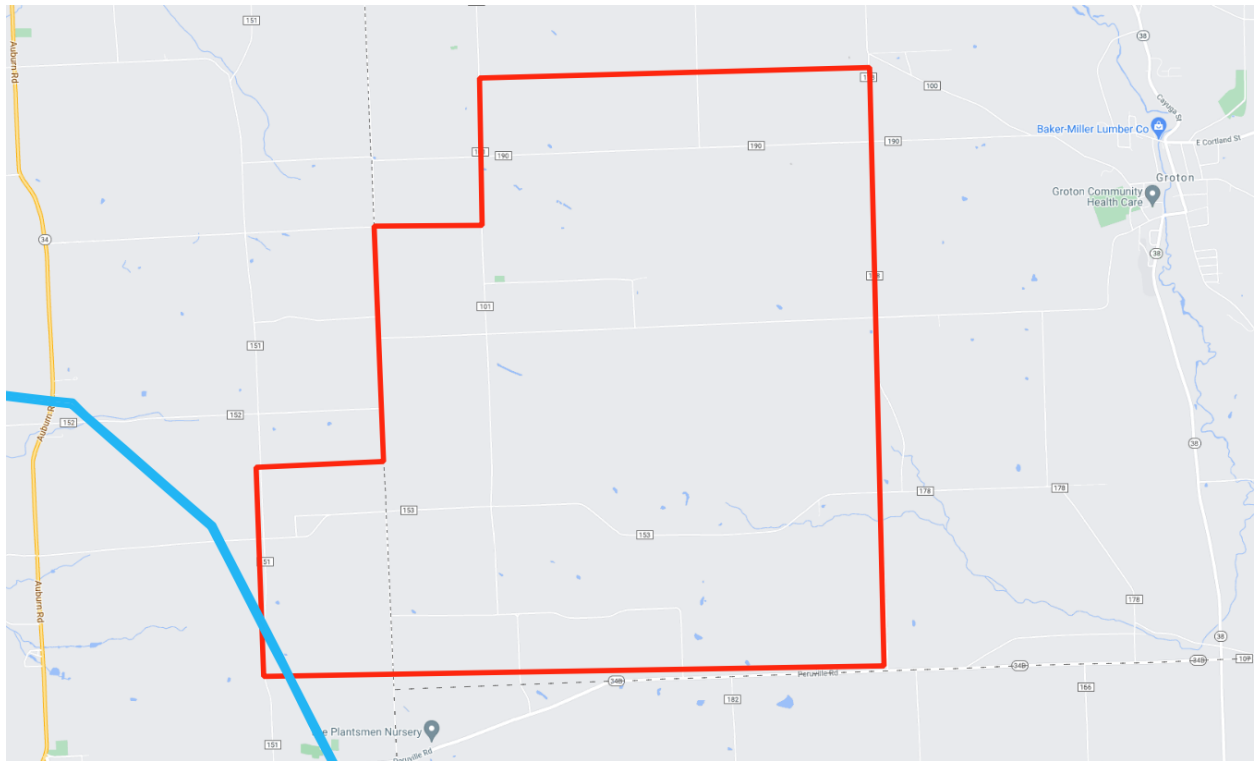


Figure 2: Local location of Yellow Barn Project



Project Schedule

The Yellow Barn Solar project has been under development since 2020 and is expected to go under construction in late 2024 or early 2025 and be operating by the end of 2026. A high-level representation of the expected project schedule is included below.

Project Task/Milestone	Start Date	Completion Date
Secure Site Control	Q2 2020	Completed Q4 2021
Town outreach and communication	Q3 2020	Ongoing
NYISO/NYSEG Interconnection Studies	Q4 2020	Q4 2024
On site environmental studies and surveys	Q3 2021	Completed Q3 2023
Neighbor and Community outreach and communication	Q3 2020	Ongoing and will continue throughout project life
NY Office of Renewable Energy Siting permit application and anticipated permit date	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Other Federal/Local Permits (building, highway, etc.)	Q2 2024	Q4 2024
Project Construction	Q1 2025	Q4 2026

Permitting

The Yellow Barn Solar project will be classified as a Major Renewable Energy Facility under Title 19 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) § 900-1.2(ag) and as such will be permitted through the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) under the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act (AREGCBA) and NYS Executive Law § 94-c. The ORES permitting process was developed through insight and input from the NY Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSAGM), the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and the NY Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYOPRHP) and addresses concerns from these agencies as well as local municipalities. The project submitted a full application to ORES on November 3rd, 2023.

The project has been designed by a third-party engineering firm with input and support from CS Energy's internal engineering team. The project has been designed to avoid impacts to water bodies as much as is practicable, including streams and wetlands, thereby largely minimizing, the need for wetland permits from the NYSDEC or the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 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, such as a permit from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that may be required.

As per the NYSERDA and ORES requirements, the Yellow Barn Project has completed a wildlife site characterization survey to identify rare and endangered species that are on or near the project location, 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 project has also completed several studies to assess the site for presence of Endangered or Threatened species, including a Wintering Grassland Raptor Survey and a Grassland Breeding Bird Survey.

The Yellow Barn 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.

CS Energy is committed to responsible siting and project development. The company has conducted initial meetings and is exploring partnerships with researchers at Cornell University to empirically study the various agriculture and ecological impacts of large-scale solar projects. The company hopes to utilize these evidence-based results to spearhead best practices for large-scale solar development.

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 Environmental Justice areas 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.

Environmental Justice Areas are defined under the NYSDEC Environmental Justice Policy Commissioner Policy as populations that meet or exceed at least one of the following statistical thresholds:

- At least 52.42% of the population in an urban area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
- At least 26.28% of the population in a rural area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
- At least 22.82% of the population in an urban or rural area had household incomes below the federal poverty level

The Applicant utilized the 2017–2021 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) census data and the statistical thresholds established by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to evaluate all U.S. census block groups within the Study Area. The ACS Dataset B03002 was used to calculate Percent Minority, and ACS Dataset C17002 was used to calculate Percent Households Below Poverty Line. The Urban/Rural status of each block group was extracted from the P2 2020 DEC Decennial Census Data. The Applicant is aware that NYSDEC published a potential EJ areas dataset in 2020; however, considering that the NYSDEC’s dataset utilizes 2014–2018 5-year ACS census data, the 2017–2021 5-year ACS census data utilized by the Applicant provides a more accurate representation of potential EJ areas in proximity to the Project. The Project Area, including a half-mile buffer around the site, is wholly contained within the following census tract/block groups in Tompkins County:

- Census Tract 23, Block Group 2;

- Census Tract 23, Block Group 1;

Based on the review of the minority and low-income population of these Census block groups, the Project Site and a half-mile buffer around the Project Site does not include land that is part of a PEJA, as defined by the State of New York. A review of NYSDEC's mapped PEJAs based on the 2014- 2018 data lists, no PEJAs within the half mile buffer. More recent 2017-2021 ACS 5 year estimates were also assessed alongside the statistical thresholds established by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation confirming that there are indeed no current PEJAs in the study area. Overall, the Project and its half-mile Study Area is not located in a PEJA.

The closest PEJA to the project area is located Less than one mile away in the Town of Dryden. The nearby hub of Ithaca also has several disadvantaged communities and Environmental Justice Areas.

Language considerations were also made to ensure that any material that is published for the project is accessible. In Tompkins County, approximately 15% of the residents aged five or older speak a language other than English per the US Census Bureau Data from 2019. This represents 15,396 people. In the town of Groton, the 4.1% of residents aged five or older identified as speaking a language other than English. This represents 250 people. Given the low percentage of non-English speaking people residing near the project, publication, and dissemination of materials in a language other than English will be carried out on request.

CS Energy seeks to prioritize economic development in Environmental Justice Areas and will work to identify opportunities that may be available to and benefit these communities. The company has pursued multiple opportunities to create job training and internship opportunities that will benefit the residents of the Ithaca area. These efforts are expanded on below.

Project Benefits

Project Construction Benefits

Development of the Yellow Barn solar project will include a significant investment in regionally based, full-time and contract employees. Surveying and Engineering firms have support support the field studies necessary to prepare the project's initial design and permit applications. Additionally, staff from TOVIP Energy, a landowner relations company based in Saratoga County, has 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 200 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, Yellow Barn 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. Electricity rate payers in Lansing and Groton will also see a small reduction in their electric utility bill. This reduction will be equivalent to \$500.00 dollars per MW of energy generated within the town and split evenly between the rate payers in the town. Finally, the project will contribute significantly to the revenues of the local taxing jurisdictions through PILOT and Host Community Agreements.

Yellow Barn Solar will directly support up to 4 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.

CS Energy is currently engaged in discussions with the Energy Warriors program out of the Cornell Cooperative extension about a potential job training program or internship program that could be

carried out through the construction portion of the project. This would directly benefit residents of Ithaca by providing accessible training for local clean energy jobs that would increase the potential to secure additional jobs in the renewable energy industry in the future. CS Energy has also contacted Ithaca Green New Deal (IGND) working group. This organization has been tasked by the City of Ithaca to find equitable solutions to the Climate Crisis. CS Energy believes that there is opportunity for collaboration in creating opportunities for the communities of focus for the IGND by providing local hiring opportunities, or by monetarily supporting their efforts to encourage the advancement of an equitable, sustainable clean energy transition and economic and environmental justice solutions. Lastly, CS Energy has engaged with the Cornell University Atkinson Center for Sustainability to offer professional level internships to Cornell Students and bring new talent into the clean energy industry.

CS Energy has also reached out to the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency to seek input on how to advance economic opportunities for environmental justice areas in and around Ithaca.

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 Yellow Barn 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 the project design 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. For the Yellow Barn Solar Project, two of the five involved taxing entities have opted out of participation in NYS's Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) 487. This law provides a 15-year real property tax exemption for properties with renewable energy systems, applicable only to the additional value added through the project. CS Energy engaged the county's Industrial Development



Agency and the local taxing jurisdictions early in the development process to discuss a PILOT agreement. The PILOT Agreement will provide certainty and flexibility for both the project and jurisdictions.

Due to the limitations of PILOT agreements under RPTL-487, CS Energy typically seeks a PILOT agreement with the County IDA for each project. However, given the importance of community buy-in for large scale projects, particularly with respect to the hosting municipality, CS Energy has engaged with the local taxing jurisdictions in parallel or in advance of engaging the IDA to establish acceptable terms of the PILOT agreement before applying to the IDA. In this case, due to the imbalance between the proportion of project impact to proportionate property tax revenue, CS Energy will negotiate a Host Community Agreement with the host municipality in addition to the IDA PILOT to ensure that the host municipality is receiving commensurate benefits. CS Energy has actively worked throughout the project development period to negotiate PILOT's and HCAs with the taxing jurisdictions. CS Energy representatives have held several conversations with Tompkins County IDA representatives to discuss the potential for a PILOT agreement for the project. Discussions have also been held with both Towns as well as their counsel regarding an HCA and PILOT agreement. All relevant parties, including the Towns and the IDA, which will be coordinating the PILOT agreement on behalf of the applicable school districts, have expressed intent to enter into a PILOT agreement with the project.

Taxing Jurisdiction	RPTL Status
Tompkins County	Opted In
Town of Lansing	Opted Out
Town of Groton	Opted Out
Lansing Central School District	Opted In
Groton 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 within 1 mile from the project location, to ensure concerns are heard and addressed through project design and mitigation efforts. AHJ's that have project oversight have been identified below.

Authority Having Jurisdiction	Contact Title	Contact Name	Contact Information	Tenure (if applicable)



Office of Renewable Energy Siting	Project Manager	Jonathan Forward	jonathan.forward@ores.ny.gov	N/A
Tompkins County	County Administrator	Lisa Holmes	(607) 274-5551	N/A
Tompkins County IDA	Administrative Director	Heather McDaniel	(607) 273-0005 heatherm@ithacaareaED.org	N/A
Town of Lansing	Town Supervisor	Ruth Groff	(607) 533-8896 rgroff@lansingtown.com	Term expires 12/31/2027
Town of Groton	Town Supervisor	Donald F. Scheffler	(607) 898-5102 supervisor@grotontown.com	Term expires 12/31/2025
Lansing Central School District	Superintendent	Chris Pettograsso	(607) 533-3020, Ext. 4001 Cpettograsso@lcsd.k12.ny.us	N/A
Groton Central School District	Superintendent	Margo Martin	607-898-5301 mmartin@groton.cnyric.org	N/A

Agencies and organizations with direct permitting and oversight responsibilities have been 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. CS Energy will also provide information on the project to area Legislators prior to formally submitting site plans and other application materials to the ORES.

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
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NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets	Consultation Agency
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYSDEC, Region 9	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting	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, 23 rd District	Area Legislator
NY State Senate, District 51, Peter Oberacker	Area Legislator
NYS Assembly, District 125, Anna Kelles	Area Legislator
Local Agencies and Governments	
Town of Lansing Town Clerk, Debbie K. Munson	Oversight
Town of Groton Town Clerk, April L. Scheffler	Oversight
Town of Lansing Planning Board	Building Permitting and Oversight
Town of Groton Planning Board	Building Permitting and Oversight

Town of Lansing Town Board	Oversight and HCA
Town of Groton Town Board	Oversight and HCA
Town of Lansing Town Supervisor, Ruth Groff	Oversight and HCA
Town of Groton Town Supervisor, Donald Scheffler	Oversight and HCA
Tompkins County IDA	Possible PILOT
Host Municipalities and School Districts	
Tompkins County	Possible PILOT, Oversight
Town of Lansing	HCA, Oversight
Town of Groton	HCA, Oversight
Lansing Central School District	Possible PILOT
Groton Central School District	Possible PILOT
Utility and Highway Departments	
Town of Lansing Highway Department	Direct Permitting Oversight
Town of Groton Highway Department	Direct Permitting Oversight
NYSEG	Transmission Owner
New York Power Authority	Interconnection
Additional Stakeholders	
Cornell University	Community Stakeholder
Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability	Community Stakeholder
Ithaca Green New Deal	Community Stakeholder
Energy Warriors	Workforce Development
Tompkins County Green Employers Council	Workforce Development
Sustainable Tompkins	Community Stakeholder
Environmental Management Council of Tompkins County	Community Stakeholder
Lansing and Groton Rod and Gun Club	Community Stakeholder
Cayuga Bird Club	Community Stakeholder
Town of Lansing Fire Department	First Responders
Town of Groton Fire Department	First Responders

Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District	Direct Oversight
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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	4 years	Continuous
Town Supervisor Meetings*	Fall 2020	4 years	Continuous
Initial Town Board Meetings	Fall 2020	2 years	Continuous
Project Neighbor Outreach	Summer 2022	3 years	Continuous
Stakeholder Organizations Panel	Spring 2022	1 year	Annual
Public Engagement Meetings**	Spring 2023	1 year	Annual
Project Informational Sessions**	Spring 2023	1 year	Annual
Direct Neighbor Outreach	Summer 2022	3 years	Continuous, on as need basis

*ORES Section 900-1.3(a) requires consultation with the chief executive officer of the municipality(ies) in which the proposed facility will be located, and any local agencies of such municipalities identified by the chief executive officer. This consultation has been fulfilled through a meeting held in Spring, 2023, as further elaborated on below.

**ORES Section 900-1.3(b) requires meeting with community members which has been fulfilled through a meeting in each Town held in Summer, 2023, as further elaborated on below.

Proposed Public Engagement

Community Engagement Activities to Date

CS Energy began exploring the Tompkins County area as a possible location for a solar project in 2019. The first landowner was signed up in late 2020, and the 24 total participating parcels in the current Project design are all under option to lease, option to purchase, or easement agreements and provide sufficient

acreage for a 160 MW system. CS Energy worked with TOVIP Energy on initial landowner identification and outreach in the area.

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 particular sensitivities or concerns that should help to guide the development. 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 with 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. CS attended several town board meetings to inform the town board and residents of the project as it developed. As the project firmed the specific locations of panels, CS began hosting meetings for community members. Details on the meetings are below.

- Representatives of the Applicant held an Open House on April 26th, 2023, in the Town of Lansing for community members to attend, learn more about the Project, ask questions, and express concerns. Owners of residencies within 1000ft of the Project Parcels were invited directly by mail to attend the event. Additionally, notice of the Open House was provided through the Yellow Barn Solar Newsletter on April 19th, 2023, to those subscribed at the time.
- Representatives of the Applicant held a Meeting with Community Members in the town of Lansing on June 22nd, 2023, and in the town of Groton on June 23rd, 2023. The purpose of this meeting was to further educate the public about the proposed Project, including our anticipated application date and information regarding the future availability of Local Agency Account Funding.

- In addition to the above, the Applicant created a personalized website for the Project on June 15th, 2022 (<https://yellowbarn-solar.com/>) and a Project-specific email (yellowbarnsolar@csenergy.com) to promote awareness of the Project and facilitate communication between the Applicant and interested stakeholders.
- The Applicant also created a newsletter in November 2022 to establish a means of providing frequent Project updates to those who sign up. Additionally, the Applicant complied with the 60-day and 3-day notice requirements set forth in §900-1.3(d) and §900-1.6(c) of the 94-c regulations.

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:

- The Applicant first met with the Town Supervisor and Director of Planning for the Town of Lansing on June 4th, 2019, to discuss the prospect of pursuing a solar project in the Town.
- The Applicant attended the Lansing Town Board meeting on August 21st, 2019, to discuss, with the Town Board, the prospect of pursuing a solar project in the Town.
- The Applicant attended the Town Board Work Session Meeting in Lansing on September 4th, 2019, to discuss the draft solar law, potential tax revenues, and initiate more detailed Project-specific discussion.
- The Applicant attended a Town Board meeting in Lansing on September 18th, 2019, to address any questions and provide feedback on the draft solar law as necessary.
- The Applicant met with the Town of Groton Supervisor and other representatives of the Town on September 15th, 2020, to discuss the prospect of pursuing a solar project in the Town.
- The Applicant attended a Lansing Town Board Meeting on October 7th, 2020, to introduce the Project company and discuss the Project and NYSERDA RFP Process generally.
- The Applicant attended Groton Town Board on October 13th, 2020, to introduce the Project company and discuss the Project and NYSERDA RFP Process generally.
- The Applicant attended additional Town Board meetings in Groton in June, July, and October of 2021. At these meetings, representatives of the Applicant presented introductory information about the project area, the project company, and the major state level processes that the Project will undergo, including the interconnection study processes with NYSEG and the NYISO, the

NYSERDA RFP process, and the Office of Renewable Energy Siting's (ORES) 94-c application process.

- The Applicant attended additional Town Board meetings in the Town of Lansing in July and August 2021. At these meetings, representatives of the Applicant presented introductory information about the project area, the project company, and the major state level processes that the Project will undergo, including the interconnection study processes with NYSEG and the NYISO, the NYSERDA RFP process, and the Office of Renewable Energy Siting's (ORES) 94-c application process. The Applicant received a letter of support from the Town of Lansing following the Town Board meeting in August 2021.
- The Applicant attended the Groton Town Board meeting on June 14th , 2022, and the Lansing Town Board meeting on June 15th, 2022, to provide an update on the status of development.
- The Applicant presented detailed information about the Project and the 94-C permitting process to the Towns of Lansing and Groton, as well as representatives from the County, Lansing Central School District, and Groton Central School District, during a joint Consultation with Local Agencies meeting held on November 15th , 2022, pursuant to §900-1.3(a). The purpose of this meeting was to provide mapping and other information regarding the proposed Project, discuss the status of completed and anticipated studies, review the relevant and substantive local laws with municipal representatives, and to designate a Project contact person.
- Representatives of the Applicant have held bi-weekly virtual meetings with representatives from both Towns and their Counsels since July 2023 to provide updates on the development process and solicit feedback on various aspects of the Project.

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. CS Energy also expects to provide consistent updates on the project's construction progress to the local municipalities, through engagement with the local AHJs, and to the public, through periodical updates to the project's website. 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 200 construction jobs. CS Energy will make all reasonable efforts to hire as many construction jobs from

local labor pools as possible. These efforts include our continued 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 expects the project's website to remain operational during the project's operations phase, and for appropriate contact information, including emergency contact information, to be posted at the project site. Appropriate contact information for the project owner, including emergency contact information, will be posted at the project website.

Public Permitting Engagement

Common Public Concerns

Because projects like Yellow Barn 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 both the Lansing and Groton Fire Departments and will be carrying out safety trainings prior to construction and throughout operations. The project site was reviewed by both of the fire departments 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 Towns of Lansing and Groton in order to stay informed of concerns that are being brought by residents. CS Energy has participated in two 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.

Mitigation Efforts

A list of some common concerns and general solutions that CS Energy has implemented for previous projects and intends to implement for the Yellow Barn 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 robust visual analysis, including 3D renderings, to determine viewsheds of concern. The company has also met with affected parties to determine the best course of action to mitigate concerns. Feedback received from the public and project neighbors has been incorporated into the viewshed mitigation plan that is currently under review by ORES. CS Energy has latitude on where landscaping buffers can be planted and what type of buffer should be used, and the company has used 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 ORES permitting process requires a robust plan for decommissioning. 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 has been established either per the ORES regulations, and will be re-evaluated at least every five years 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 PILOT and Host Community Agreements which will represent the bulk of the property tax payments the project will make. These agreements are 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. Throughout the development process, CS Energy has been engaged with the local municipalities and other project stakeholders to make sure everyone understands how the project will be paying property taxes.

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, Yellow Barn 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. CS Energy will work with landowners to improve the health of the soil to the extent appropriate in conjunction with the project's agricultural co-utilization plan. When the project has reached the end of its life, the land can easily be converted back into agricultural land. CS Energy is also actively researching co-locating agriculture on these types of projects and has engaged with researchers at Cornell to utilize solar projects as agricultural land. Lastly, Yellow Barn Solar will avoid state recognized prime soils to the greatest extent possible, however, the project will pay NYSAGM mitigation fees for each acre of prime soils which cannot be avoided.

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 was 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. The company has also held public information sessions and attended town board meetings. Meeting agendas and minutes have been disseminated to the public through traditional channels. A third method of communication has been through the creation of an informative website- YellowBarn-Solar.com. The website features detailed project information, a frequently asked question page with answers, and a contact form, and functions as a platform for notification of information sessions, town hall meetings, and other relevant information.

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 has engaged with Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency as well to provide more details on the project and discuss a PILOT.

Notification

Project information will be published via the project website (YellowBarn-Solar.com) and will include, at a minimum, notification to the following:

- The Office of Renewable Energy Siting
- Each member of the State Legislature whose district will have any portion of the project

Project Contact

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



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