



September 14, 2022

Town of Skaneateles  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Attention: Denise Rhoads, Chairman  
24 Jordan Street  
Skaneateles, NY 13152

Re: Project Narrative for Proposed Skaneateles Solar Farm  
Tax Parcel #023.-05-01.1 & 024.-01-34.0  
Town of Skaneateles, Onondaga County, New York

Dear Chairman Rhoads and ZBA Members:

TJA-NY-Skaneateles Solar Farm, LLC. is proposing the construction of a new community solar farm located at 740 Sheldon Road in the Town of Skaneateles. The Project site is situated in the Rural Residential or "RR" Zoning District. The Project will involve the construction of a 4.35 MW AC solar facility on an existing 50.58± acre parcel of land (024.-01-34.0). The proposed Project will also involve the construction of a limited use pervious gravel access driveway with emergency turnaround sections on an existing 54.09 acre parcel of land (023.-05-01.1). Additional scope of work will include the installation of a 7 ft high chain-link perimeter fence, underground and overhead electrical lines, power inverters, and utility poles.

The existing lots are vacant and consists largely of natural upland and forested habitats. There are several active agricultural fields on site being utilized for corn and hay production. In addition, there are four (4) wetlands and one (1) stream under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers present on site. The project area is bounded to the north by Sheldon Road, to the east by forested habitat, to the south by active agricultural fields and forested habitat, and to the west by suburban residential properties.

The Project will interconnect to the local pre-existing electrical distribution system. Power generated from this facility will be sold directly to consumers via the State's Community Distributed Generation Program. This program allows customers to directly offset their energy use with local solar power, while saving money on their electrical bills. The proposed solar facility will utilize approximately 11,232 solar modules and 29 string inverters. Ground mounted single axis photovoltaic tracker panels will be utilized for the proposed solar facility. The associated tracking technology will allow the modules to maximize it's energy output by efficiently tracking the sun throughout the day. The modules will be mounted onto a steel racking system, which will be anchored into the ground using driven steel posts. The overall height of the solar array will not exceed 15 feet.

We acknowledge the importance of following all the provisions and requirements set forth by the Town of Skaneateles and will address any concerns that may arise in the goal to maintain the integrity of the Town's local laws. Items such as glare, noise, safety, security, pollution, traffic, and so forth will be thoroughly analyzed for the development of the Project. Please refer below to the previously discussed items.

- Local Law: The proposed Project will adhere to all setback, lot coverage, lot size, and associated requirements of the designated zoning and land use district. All project related documents will comply with the relevant site plan review standards and guidelines.



- Glare: Solar panels by their nature are designed to absorb sunlight not reflect it. We anticipate that there will be no increase in reflective lighting from the solar panels. In addition the proposed Project site is bounded by existing wooded habitats, creating a natural landscape buffer between adjoining properties.
- Noise: Solar farms are low noise emitting facilities. Inverters and transformers on site may generate a quite humming noise, but typically cannot be heard unless standing directly adjacent to the equipment. Standard operations and maintenance activities, such as utilizing lawn mowing equipment or site inspections may occur, but will generally create minimal noise. The construction phase will generate the largest increase in noise level due to heavy equipment, but will only occur during normal business hours.
- Safety: Solar arrays are designed to meet and or exceed all of the requirements of the National Electric Code (NEC), the utility service to which it will be connected to as well as any local requirements and safety regulations. All onsite personnel will be properly trained and the appropriate qualifications will be obtained to complete the task assigned. Following the completion of the Project, first responders and local emergency services will typically participate, at their discretion, in a site specific orientation and safety training session on what to expect and the proper steps to isolate the solar facility in an emergency situation. Proper warning labels will be placed on all electrical equipment and a warning sign will be placed along the perimeter fence access gate that will include the appropriate contact information.
- Security: As previously mentioned, a 7 ft high chain-link perimeter fence will encompass the entire solar facility to prevent the general public from accessing the Project site.
- Pollution/Toxicity: The proposed modules are made from environmentally friendly crystalline silicon panels that do not contain any toxic materials. The proposed transformers will utilize an environmentally friendly FR3 oil, which is essentially vegetable oil and does not produce any toxic odors or harmful gases. In addition, towards the end of the solar system life cycle, all defective panels will either be returned to the manufacturer for appropriate disposal or transported to a certified recycling facility where the glass, metal, and semi-conductor materials are separated and recycled. Once all site material have been removed, the Project site will be returned to pre-development conditions.
- Traffic: The proposed Project will not create an increase in traffic during normal business hours. In the event that traffic congestion is present, an appropriate traffic control plan will be implemented to maintain the normal traffic flow of the surrounding area. Safety measures will put in place to ensure the well-being of potential pedestrian traffic.
- Limited Use Pervious Gravel Access Driveway: Following the establishment of New York State's renewable energy objectives, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) introduced a Solar Panel Construction Stormwater Permitting/SWPPP Guidance to accommodate the increasing development of solar farms. Part of this guideline introduces the use of a limited use pervious gravel for the site access driveway. The limited use pervious gravel is an NYSDEC approved material that contains several beneficial attributes in regards to stormwater management. In comparison to standard gravel or crusher-run material, the limited use pervious gravel will allow for greater infiltration of rainfall, therefore reducing surface runoff from the site. In addition, the porous gravel will allow for groundwater recharge and the removal of potential pollutants in the underlying soil. Although the Town of Skaneateles considers



any driveway as an impervious surface, regardless of the material used, the proposed limited use pervious gravel has all the properties that can designate the surface as being pervious. As well as providing positive stormwater treatment, the proposed limited use pervious gravel will involve less overall grading, disturbance, and tree clearing within the Project site. The limited use pervious gravel access driveway will only be utilized on a minimal basis throughout the year. The limited access will include routine site inspection and maintenance that may occur once a month.

- Emergency Access: The proposed limited use pervious gravel driveway has been designed to include turnaround sections for emergency vehicle entry and exit. In addition a knox box will be installed at the entrance gate to allow for unscheduled emergency access.
- Environmental Considerations: During the preliminary design of the Project certain site planning practices were implemented, such as preservation of undisturbed areas and buffers, reduction of clearing and grading, and locating the development in less sensitive areas. Although minimal disturbance may be anticipated within the delineated wetlands on site, only temporary impacts will occur due to minor construction traffic. To ensure that the natural hydrology of the site remains unchanged, any area within the wetlands that have been temporarily disturbed will be returned to existing conditions. Natural landscape buffers on the Project site will be maintained to ensure the integrity of scenic viewsheds and resources within the Town of Skaneateles. In the event that the solar facility is no longer active, all associated equipment and materials will be removed and the property will be returned to its pre-development condition.
- Lot Line Adjustment: The proposed Project will involve a lot merger between Tax Parcel #023.-05-01.1 and 024.-01-34.0. The consolidation between the two lots will allow the Project to conform with all applicable zoning and solar regulations for the corresponding zoning district.
- Area Variance: The proposed Project will involve disturbance within a 100-ft wetland buffer and will therefore require an area variance from the Town Zoning Board of Appeals. Our attempts to avoid the wetland buffer are unfeasible due to natural hydrologic features to the west of the buffer zone and the property line to the east of the buffer zone. Access to the solar facility can only be accomplished by following the geometry of the existing field road on site and through the approval of the area variance.
- Local Utility Services: The proposed Project will generate clean electrical energy for the local community and will not have any impact to the public water, drainage, sewer, or any other utility service system in the Town.
- Local Housing: The availability of affordable housing in the Town of Skaneateles will not be impacted as a result of this Project. The Project site is a vacant lot, currently utilized for agricultural purposes.



This Project is an opportunity to generate a cleaner and more self-sufficient energy source available for the Town of Skaneateles, while also contributing to the New York State's renewable energy goals. We look forward to working with the Town of Skaneateles to advance this project through the local review and approval process. Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 518.556.3631 or via email at [eredding@BERGMANNPC.com](mailto:eredding@BERGMANNPC.com).

Sincerely,

Eric Redding, PE  
Energy + Environment Discipline Leader, BERGMANN

Cc: Michael Frateschi, TJA Clean Energy, LLC.