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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Date: February 26, 2024

Project: Wilson Hill Road Solar Project

BACKGROUND

The proposed project includes the construction of a 5 mW (AC) ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) system to be installed within tax parcel 26.-1-12.21/1 located in the Town of Hoosick, Rensselaer County, New York. The project will involve the construction of a single axis tracker style solar array, utilizing central inverter and transformer equipment, encompassing approximately 19.5 acres of the 99.52 +/- acre parcel. The project will be accessed by a gravel service road.

A Visual Impact Assessment was conducted that studies the proposed solar array from 7 different vantage points south and east of the project site along Wilson Hill Road, Route 22, Hill Road, and Rogers Avenue. The following provides a summary of the selected vantage points, methods used, and results of the visual assessment.

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Figures 1-17 of the Visual Impact Assessment illustrate that Receptors A, B, X2, Y1, & Y2 will likely experience varying degrees of visual impact due to topography, vegetation, distance, or a combination thereof. Receptors X1 and Z will likely experience little to no visual impact.

VISUAL ASSESSMENT VANTAGE POINTS

The vantage points include a single point along Wilson Hill Road at the project site, two points along Route 22, two points along Hill Road, as well as a single point on Rogers Avenue. The project falls outside of any Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS) according to the statutory boundary designated by the Department of State. The visual assessment includes the following vantage points and viewshed locations:

1. Receptor A: Wilson Hill Road at project site looking northeast
2. Receptor B: Wilson Hill Road at project site looking southeast
3. Receptor X1: Route 22 at Hoosick Falls School looking northwest
4. Receptor X2: Route 22 at Wysocki Farm looking northwest
5. Receptor Y1: Hill Road looking northwest
6. Receptor Y2: Hill Road looking northwest
7. Receptor Z: Intersection of Rogers Avenue and Ashley Drive looking west

VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODS

The proposed solar array is expected to include solar panels installed with a maximum height above existing grade of approximately 15 ft and extend over an area of approximately 19.5 acres. In addition to the solar panels themselves, the facility will include an 8 ft tall agricultural post and wire security fence. A Visual Impact Assessment utilizing NYS provided lidar and Google Earth was performed to assess the potential visibility of 7 receptor vantage points within the project study area. The project study area is defined by the surrounding roads as depicted in Figure 1 of the Visual Impact Assessement.

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

For each of the vantage points a summary of the potential for visual impact is provided below.

Receptor A: Wilson Hill Road at project site looking northeast

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor A is shown on Figures 2-5. Figures 2-5 show, at 5 feet, depending on the time of year, the solar array will have varying degrees of visibility from the receptor location due to a break in the existing vegetation. The proposed evergreen screening will help to mitigate visibility from this vantage point.

Between Receptor A and the northern property boundary of the project parcel, the ground surface fluctuates from an elevation of approximately 600 ft at Wilson Hill Road to 800 ft along the northern property boundary. The edge of the array is located approximately 920 ft from the receptor location.

Receptor B: Wilson Hill Road at project site looking southeast

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor B is shown on Figures 6-9. Figures 6-9 show detailed visualizations of the proposed interconnection, interconnection access road, and temporary access road to the proposed solar array.

Receptor X1: Route 22 at Hoosick Falls School looking northwest

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor X1 is shown on Figure 10 of the Visual Impact Assessment as well as Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis. The associated figures show, at 5 feet, the solar array is most likely not visible from the receptor location.

Between points X and X' shown in Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis, the ground surface fluctuates from an elevation of approximately 450 ft at point X to 875 ft at point X' located along the western property boundary. The edge of the array is located approximately 12,500 ft from the receptor location.

Receptor X2: Route 22 at Wysocki Farm looking northwest

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor X2 is shown on Figures 11 & 12 of the Visual Impact Assessment as well as Figure 3 of the Section Elevation Analysis. Section X2 shows, at 5 feet, the solar array will likely be visible from the receptor location.

Between points X2 and X2' shown in Figure 3 of the Section Elevation Analysis, the ground surface fluctuates from an elevation of approximately 450 ft at point X2 to 880 ft at point X2' located along the western property boundary. The edge of the array is located approximately 14,200 ft from the receptor location.

Receptor Y1: Hill Road looking northwest

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor Y1 is shown on Figures 13 & 14 of the Visual Impact Assessment as well as Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis. Section Y1 shows, at 5 feet, the solar array may be slightly visible from the receptor location.

Between points Y1 and Y1' shown in Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis, the ground surface fluctuates from an elevation of approximately 650 ft at point Y1 to 880 ft at point Y2' located along the western property boundary. The edge of the array is located approximately 13,300 ft from the receptor location.

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Receptor Y2: Hill Road looking northwest

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor Y2 is shown on Figures 15 & 16 of the Visual Impact Assessment. Figure 15 & 16 show, at 5 feet, the solar array will likely be visible from the receptor location.

Receptor Z: Intersection of Rogers Avenue and Ashley Drive looking west

The viewshed analysis performed for Receptor Z is shown on Figure 17 of the Visual Impact Assessment as well as Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis. Section Z shows, at 5 feet, the solar array will likely not be visible from the receptor location.

Between points Z and Z' shown in Figure 2 of the Section Elevation Analysis, the ground surface fluctuates from an elevation of approximately 650 ft at point Z to 880 ft at point Z' located along the western property boundary. The edge of the array is located approximately 11,800 ft from the receptor location.

Conclusions

Based on the above assessment, it is concluded that Receptors A, B, X2, Y1, & Y2 will likely experience varying degrees of visual impact due to topography, vegetation, distance, or a combination thereof. Receptors X1 and Z will likely experience little to no visual impact.