



J.Ryan McMahon II
County Executive

Onondaga County Planning Board

RESOLUTION OF THE ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Date: April 08, 2020

OCPB Case # Z-20-107

- WHEREAS, the Onondaga County Planning Board, pursuant to General Municipal Law, Section 239 l, m and n, has considered and reviewed the referral for a SITE PLAN from the Town of Manlius Planning Board at the request of Taft Solar, LLC for the property located at East Taft Road; and
- WHEREAS, General Municipal Law Section 239-m allows the County Planning Board to review approval of site plans and the site is located within 500 feet of East Taft Road (Route 18), a county highway, and the municipal boundaries between the Towns of Manlius, Cicero and DeWitt; and
- WHEREAS, the applicant is proposing construction of a 3.45 MW-AC solar farm on 17.3 acres of a 37.682-acre parcel in a Restricted Agricultural (R-A) zoning district; and
- WHEREAS, the Board recently reviewed a special permit referral (Z-20-86) associated with the proposed project; and
- WHEREAS, the site is located in a rural area east of I-481 with surrounding residential land uses and large tracts of agricultural lands and wooded areas; aerial imagery shows the site has frontage on East Taft Road, a county road that also marks the boundary between the Towns of Manlius, DeWitt, and Cicero in this location, and contains vacant, undeveloped land; per aerial imagery, there are existing transmission towers and overhead utility lines along the western lot line, which are served by an existing gravel access road onto East Taft Road; per the local application, the site will be purchased by the applicant subject to approvals for the project; and
- WHEREAS, the submitted application and plan indicate the solar farm will include installation of 263 solar tables with a total of 13,522 solar panels, each standing 9' in height, with portions of the solar arrays occurring on either side of a drainage channel on the southern half of the site; the solar arrays will be enclosed by a 6' high chain link fence with 3 strands of barbed wire affixed to the top; there will be two new equipment pads within the fence enclosure, each containing an inverter and battery storage; the plan shows a row of new landscaping at the front of the site to screen the view from East Taft Road; and
- WHEREAS, per the plan, the solar farm will be served by a new 12' wide gravel access roadway onto East Taft Road; the proposed road requires two new SICPP culverts, one 18" at the front of the site and one 24" to cross the drainage channel; ADVISORY NOTES: the proposed driveway onto East Taft Road requires highway access and work permits from the Onondaga County Department of Transportation and will be subject to the availability of sight distance; all existing or proposed driveways on a County road must meet Department requirements; and
- WHEREAS, the project is intended for Community Solar purposes and the plan shows proposed utility poles and overhead electrical wiring at the front of the site to

connect the solar farm to the existing utility grid; the submitted Letter of Intent dated February 6, 2020 indicates the application for interconnection to the utility grid will be submitted with formal plans; per the submitted Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) dated February 6, 2020, the applicant is seeking a PILOT agreement with the Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency (OCIDA) for the project; and

WHEREAS, per the EAF, 0.8 acres of the site will be disturbed by the proposed project; the EAF notes that maximum depth of ground disturbance will not exceed 4 feet and the helix screws (or H-piles) of the solar tables will be installed at a depth of approximately 8-10 feet;

ADVISORY NOTE: per the Onondaga County Department of Transportation, additional stormwater runoff into the county's drainage system is prohibited; and

WHEREAS, the site does not have existing drinking water or wastewater services and is located outside of the Onondaga County Sanitary District; no drinking water or wastewater services are proposed as part of the project; and

WHEREAS, the Letter of Intent indicates a wetland delineation was completed in July 2019 and is subject to final determination by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE); a wetland report will be produced under separate submittal once a final determination is made by the USACOE; the delineated wetland boundaries is not shown on the project plans; however, the letter notes that a wetland permit will be required from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and obtained for installation of the solar array within the 100' wetland buffer, and a USACOE permit will be required and obtained for the culvert installation within the existing drainage ditch; and

WHEREAS, the EAF notes that NYSDEC Spill #0702926 is identified in the area under the power lines located on the northern portion of the site; the NYSDEC Spill listing identifies this as a hydraulic oil spill to the soil, which occurred in 2007 and has since been closed; and

WHEREAS, the site may contain the Indiana bat, or its associated habitat, which has been listed by the state or federal government as a threatened or endangered animal species (per EAF Mapper); impacts to bat species are often associated with tree clearing and from the plans it appears that no trees will be removed as part of the proposed project; and

WHEREAS, the site or a portion of it is located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites on the NYS Historic Preservation Office archaeological site inventory (per EAF Mapper); the referral materials includes a letter from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), dated February 5, 2020, that indicates the office reviewed the project and determined that no properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, will be impacted by the project; and

WHEREAS, ADVISORY NOTE: per GML § 239-nn, the legislative body or other authorized body having jurisdiction in a municipality shall give notice to an adjacent municipality when a hearing is held by such body relating to a subdivision, site plan, special use permit, or a use variance on property that is within five hundred feet of an adjacent municipality; such notice shall be given by mail or electronic transmission to the clerk of the adjacent municipality at least ten days prior to

any such hearing; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Onondaga County Planning Board recommends the following MODIFICATION(S) to the proposed action prior to local board approval of the proposed action:

The applicant must contact the Onondaga County Department of Transportation to coordinate requirements for the proposed driveway on East Taft Road, in order to satisfy commercial driveway standards, which will require paving the portion of the driveway in the right-of-way and aligning the driveway with the existing driveway on the north side of East Taft Road. To further meet Department requirements, the applicant must contact the Department to discuss any required drainage data for the proposed project. The municipality must ensure any mitigation as may be determined by the Department is reflected on the project plans prior to, or as a condition of, municipal approval.

The Board also offers the following comments:

1. Additional landscape screening is encouraged to buffer the solar farm from the adjacent VFW property and nearby residential uses.
2. The applicant and Town are encouraged to further minimize encroachment into wetland areas, and/or provide high-quality mitigation to preserve these important and sensitive environmental areas to the extent possible. Best practices to consider related to wetland and habitat protection may include avoiding soil compaction during construction, avoiding drilled foundations, restoring or improving adjacent wetlands, buffering stream channels, planting of beneficial and diverse native species and pollinators and removing invasive species, and allowing small openings in fencing to allow for small wildlife movement.
3. For more information regarding the management of Battery Energy Solar System (BESS) development within solar projects, the Town is advised to coordinate with the CNY Regional Planning Development Board (RPDB) Energy Management office. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) also offers a BESS model law, model permit, and full guidebook to help local governments manage such systems in their community.
4. The Town is advised to ensure battery storage systems meet applicable requirements for fire prevention and safety and handling of potentially hazardous materials.



Daniel Cupoli, Chairman
Onondaga County Planning Board
Transmittal Date: 04-08-2020

GML 239 Report of Final Action

NYS GML § 239-m.6. and n.6. require the referring body to file a report of the final action it has taken on a referred matter with the county planning agency within 30 days after the final action (separate from the minutes taken at the meeting). A referring body which acts contrary to a County Planning Board recommendation of MODIFICATION or DISAPPROVAL of a referred matter shall also set forth the reasons for the contrary action in such report.

This section to be completed by the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency

To: Onondaga County Planning Board **From:** Town of Manlius Planning Board

Fax: 435-2439 **Phone:** 435-2611

Re: Applicant: Taft Solar, LLC
Address: at East Taft Road
Referral Type: SITE PLAN
OCPB Date: April 08, 2020
OCPB Action: Modification
OCPB Case #: Z-20-107

The local board took the following action regarding the above referenced referral (Check one box. If checking Other, please specify the final action taken. Use the space at the bottom of the report to identify reasons if acting contrary to the OCPB recommendation.):

- Approved the proposed action with regard to the OCPB's No Position or No Position with Comment.
- Approved the proposed action as modified by the OCPB.
- Approved the proposed action contrary to some of the modifications recommended by the OCPB.*
- Approved the proposed action contrary to all of the modifications recommended by the OCPB.*
- Approved the proposed action contrary to the disapproval recommended by the OCPB.*

- Disapproved the proposed action with regard to the OCPB's no position or no position with comment.
- Disapproved the proposed action with regard to the recommended modification(s) by the OCPB.
- Disapproved the proposed action as recommended and for reasons set forth by the OCPB.
- Disapproved the proposed action as recommended but for reasons other than those set forth by the OCPB. (Please list reasons below for local disapproval.)

- Other _____

Local Board Date: _____

*List reasons for acting contrary to the OCPB recommendation and include a copy of the local board resolution. Attach additional reasons on a separate sheet of paper as necessary.
