



To: Goodrich Farm - Salisbury
Anaerobic Digester 1 Project File

Date: September 28, 2018

Memorandum

From: Lucy Thayer, Landscape
Architect, and Michael Willard,
LEED AP, Senior Landscape
Architect

Project #: 58073.00

Re: Aesthetic Review

INTRODUCTION

Salisbury AD 1, LLC ("Salisbury AD 1") proposes to construct and operate an anaerobic digester ("AD") project at the Goodrich Farm in Salisbury, VT. The Project received a Section 248 Certificate of Public Good ("CPG") from the Vermont Public Utility Commission ("PUC" or "Commission") on April 8, 2016 ("the As-Approved Project").¹ Lincoln RNG is no longer pursuing development of the project, and will transfer the CPG to Salisbury AD 1, subject to the Commission's prior approval. Salisbury AD 1 has revised the As-Approved Project's design in various respects ("the Proposed Modifications"), resulting in the Final Project. VHB has been retained to review the incremental aesthetic impact, if any, of the Proposed Modifications, and, more generally, of the Final Project design.

The content of this technical memorandum presents the results of an assessment of any new or incremental aesthetic impacts of the Final Project as compared with the As-Approved Project, in relation to Section 248 (b)(5) -- Aesthetics, Historic Sites (incorporating 10 V.S.A. § 6056(a)(8)).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Consistent with the As-Approved Project, the Final Project will consist of the installation and operation of anaerobic digester facility that will use manure from the Goodrich Farm and regionally sourced food waste to generate methane gas. The Final Project's siting and layout reflected in these updated materials is based upon a combination of proposed equipment requirements, ongoing farm operational needs and circulation, minimization of impacts to, wetlands, streams, their associated buffers, forested areas, setbacks from road and property lines, sound levels, visual impact considerations, and existing features. The components of the Final Project and the Proposed Modifications are summarized in Exhs. SAD1-1 through -4 of the Motion to Amend CPG. A comparison of the Final Project Site Plan and As-Approved Project Site Plan is provided in Exh. SAD1-3.

Section 248 Aesthetics Review

The Aesthetics criterion requires that "the project will not have an undue adverse effect on scenic or natural beauty of the area, [and] aesthetics," For the Proposed Modifications reflected in the Final Project design, VHB's consideration of aesthetics and scenic resources include the nature of the Project surroundings, the Project's design compatibility with its surroundings, colors and materials, impact on open space, and visibility. The attached Context Map and Site Photos taken during the site visit demonstrate, as with the As-Approved Project that was to be located on the same site (the

¹ See Docket #8596.



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Goodrich Farm), the limited visibility of the Final Project from surrounding publicly accessible locations and show project area aesthetics. Refer to the context map and photographs provided with this memo.

Nature of the Project Surroundings

VHB conducted a site visit and inspection of the surrounding area on September 24, 2018 along publicly accessible roads near the Project site. As with the As-Approved Project, the area surrounding the Final Project can be described as a typical rural Vermont / Addison County landscape with agricultural fields and farming operations mixed with field hedges and wooded areas. There are a variety of residences and structures dotting the road with views of the Adirondacks to the west and the Green Mountains to the east.

Project's Design Compatibility with its Surroundings

Consistent with the As-Approved Project, the Final Project has been designed to be integrated into the farm building complex. The utility building and CHP building will be located near / behind the existing silage bunkers and will each be comprised of shipping containers that are 40 feet by 8 feet. Additionally, the office / lab space will be a shipping container with the same dimensions. The separator building, measuring 50 feet by 30 feet, and the round manure tank, with a capacity of 26,500 gal, will be nestled behind the existing barn and among other farm structures. The anaerobic digester tanks, measuring 100 feet long by 60 feet wide and 20 feet height above ground, are located at the farthest location from the roadway at an elevation that is approximately 10' below the road elevation. The nutrient (digestate) storage tank, which is approximately 30 feet in height, will bear resemblance to manure slurry tanks frequently seen on Vermont dairy farms. The biogas upgrader will be approximately 28 feet by 50 feet in size, with the stack measuring approximately 20 feet in height, and will be located behind / adjacent to the existing nutrient management building, which measures over 25 feet in height. Also included in the Final Project design is a backup generator and a truck turnaround, which will be an expansion of an existing turn around area. All the Final Project structures are compatible with the surroundings.

Project Colors and Materials

Consistent with the As-Approved Project, the Final Project colors and materials are suitable and consistent with the context of both the immediate and greater surroundings. The materials and colors have been chosen to integrate and incorporate the Final Design with the existing farm complex and operations and draw on farm building vernacular and language.

Project Impact on Open Space

The As-Approved and Final Projects are materially the same with regard to open space. All of the Project components will be located in proximity to existing structures on a working farm, in an area that is not used for crop production. There will be no impact on open space.

Project Visibility

Based on the site visit and inspection, VHB determined that there will be only limited visibility of the Final Project from publicly accessible locations.

Views of the Final Project area will be limited to highly specific vantage points due to existing farm structures, outbuildings and equipment, and intervening vegetation that will obstruct most of the Final Project's structures. Existing



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farm operations, structures and equipment occupy the area north of the Final Project site and will block a majority of the Final Project's structures for southbound travelers on Shard Villa Road. Along the southern portion of the Project site, a robust deciduous hedgerow is present and will block views for northbound travelers on Shard Villa Road. Given that this hedgerow is deciduous, it is likely there will be some filtered views to the Final Project site during winter months when deciduous plants do not have leaf cover. The primary area of Project visibility will be at the intersection of the Project access road and Shard Villa Road. At this location and approximately 250 feet north of that intersection, portions of the Final Project will have visibility. The nutrient storage tank will be the most visible component of the project, as it is located closest to the Shard Villa road. However, as stated previously, the structure's materials and form will be similar to Vermont farm manure tanks, a common site. Overall, the length of view window (~250 feet), siting of the Final Project equipment (most being directly adjacent to the existing farm complex), orientation of the road (facing slightly southeast, with the Final Project mostly to the west) all contribute to highly specific and limited project visibility.

There is one other area of potential visibility from public roads, specifically along approximately 750 feet of roadway on West Salisbury Road. Visibility of the Final Project from West Salisbury Road will be partial and limited due to the distance to the Project (approximately 0.63 miles), intermittent vegetation, and the style and form of the Project components, which will allow the Project to blend into the existing farm complex.

CONCLUSION

The overall visibility of the Final Project site is specific to very limited locations. Additionally, the Final Project has been sited to be integrated into the existing farm complex and uses materials and colors that are visually compatible with the agricultural use of the site as well as the general context of the area. Based on these findings, in VHB's opinion the Final Project is not materially different than the As-Approved Project in terms of visual impacts. It will not have an adverse effect on visual aesthetics, either on its own merits or as compared with the As-Approved Project.



Site Photos



Photo 1: Panoramic view from Shard Villa Road looking southwest in the direction of the Final Project. The existing farm structures will block most of the views to the Final Project.



Photo 2: Panoramic view from Shard Villa Road looking southwest in the direction of the Final Project. The Final Project will be visible from here.



Photo 3: Panoramic view from the intersection of Shard Villa Road and Pidgeon Road looking west in the direction of the Final Project. The Final Project will be visible from here.

Site Photos



Photo 4: Panoramic view from onsite looking northeast from the truck turnaround area.



Photo 5: Panoramic view from onsite looking east from the approximate location of the nutrient storage tank.



Photo 6: View facing northeast from the access road looking at existing farm structures.



Photo 7: View from Shard Villa Road near the intersection of the Final Project access road looking south. The deciduous hedgerow along the road that will help to screen most of the project.

Site Photos



Photo 8: View from Shard Villa Road looking north toward the intersection of Shard Villa and Pidgeon Road.



Photo 9: View from the Final Project access road looking east toward the Pidgeon Road and the neighboring residence. Notice the large tree in front of the house along the road.



Photo 10: View from Shard Villa Road looking northwest at a residence that is located south of the Final Project.



Photo 11: View from Shard Villa Road looking west toward the Final Project.



Photo 12: View from Shard Villa Road looking northwest at the existing farm and complex.



Photo 13: View Shard Villa Road looking southwest toward the Final Project and an existing structure on the farm complex.

Site Photos



Photo 14: View from the intersection of Shard Villa Road and West Salisbury Road.



Photo 15: View from Shard Villa Road looking south at an existing outbuilding along the road.



Photo 16: View from the intersection of Shard Villa Road and Columbus Smith Road looking west at Shard Villa.



Photo 17: View from the intersection of Shard Villa Road and Columbus Smith Road looking south.



Photo 18: View from Shard Villa Road looking west at a property north of the site.



Photo 19: View from Shard Villa Road looking southwest at Goodrich Farm.