



MEMORANDUM

To: Encore Renewable Energy
From: Michael J. Buscher
Date: December 3, 2024
Re: Reservoir Road Solar Project – Historic Structures Review

The Reservoir Road Solar Project (or the “Project”) is being developed by Reservoir Road Solar, LLC (the “Petitioner” or “RRS”), on a property located off Reservoir Road in Berkshire, Vermont. The Project is a proposed 2.375 MW (AC) photovoltaic electric generation facility. The fenced portion of the Project would occupy approximately 10.5 acres of the greater combined 113-acre parcel and 88-acre parcel. The array would consist of approximately 5,472 non-reflective photovoltaic panel modules mounted on ± 30 rows of fixed, ground-mounted racking systems. Rows of panels would run east-west, oriented towards the south at a fixed angle between 20-30 degrees. Racking systems would be roughly 10-15 feet tall on the high side.

T.J. Boyle Associates (“TJBA”) conducted a review of data available on the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation’s (“VDHP”) Online Resource Center¹ for the Town of Berkshire. A review of the VDHP Online Resource Center resulted in the identification of several properties of historical significance located within Berkshire that are listed or may be eligible for the State Registers. Several of these properties are within relatively close proximity to the Project including:

- **Hull-Mullen-Sherwood House (20):** 1870 – Classic Cottage house located on Stagecoach Road, approximately 0.72 miles southeast of the Project.
- **Johnson-Ploof-Dodd House (21):** 1870 – Greek Revival/Italianate house located on Reservoir Road, approximately 0.27 miles southeast of the Project.
- **Jeffords-Davis-Bassinger House (22):** 1871 – Italianate house located on Reservoir Road, approximately 0.22 miles southeast of the Project.
- **Lefebvre-Bates House (23):** 1835 – Greek Revival house located on Reservoir Road, approximately 0.21 miles southeast of the Project.
- **Rublee-Burfoot Farm (24):** 1880 – Italianate house located on Water Tower Road, approximately 0.63 miles southwest of the Project.
- **Stanhope Farm (31):** 1855 – Greek Revival/Italianate house located on the north side of VT Route 105, approximately 0.65 miles northeast of the Project.
- **Martel Farm-Marchall Residence (32):** 1855 – 19th century farm buildings located on Water Tower Road, approximately 0.86 miles northwest of the Project.

TJBA conducted an assessment of potential aesthetic impacts as a result of the Project, including an analysis of potential visibility utilizing GIS viewshed analysis. In particular, the vegetated viewshed analysis (see

¹ <https://orc.vermont.gov/Resource/Show-Resource-Table.aspx>
http://accdservices.vermont.gov/ORCDocs/Berkshire_StateRegister_NominationForm_00000003.pdf

Exhibit RRS-MB-2, Appendix A, Map 3), which considers the screening effect of surrounding vegetation and other obstructions, indicated that the Project would have extremely limited visibility from locations offsite. The site and field review found that the proposed Project would not be visible from the surrounding area. The vegetated viewshed clearly indicates there would be no visibility from the identified historic properties in the area. The terrain viewshed analysis (see Appendix A, Map 2) only accounts for intervening landform and does not take into account topographic obstructions, such as buildings and vegetation that would screen visibility of the Project. This map represents the maximum area from which the Project would be visible, and significantly overstates probable visibility.

The terrain viewshed clearly indicates there would be no visibility from the Hull-Mullen-Sherwood House (20), the Johnson-Ploof-Dodd House (21), the Jeffords-Davis-Bassinger House (22), the Lefebvre-Bates House (23), and the Martel Farm-Marchall Residence (32). However, the terrain viewshed does indicate potential visibility from Rublee-Burfoot Farm (24), and Stanhope Farm (31). To confirm where the Project may be visible, field investigation was then conducted and documented at selected viewpoint locations with photography, notes, and GPS points (see Appendix B, Photo Inventory).

While the terrain viewshed map indicated potential visibility from Rublee-Burfoot Farm, and Stanhope Farm, the field visit determined that the above-ground historic resources would likely have no visibility of the Project due to the intervening vegetation and terrain west of the Project area.

In conclusion, although there are several above-ground historic resources surrounding the Project, the siting of the proposed solar array takes advantage of surrounding landform and vegetation that significantly screens the array from the surrounding area. Based on our review, TJBA determined that there would be no visibility of the Project from the identified historic properties in the area.

