

July 11, 2025

Via First-Class Mail and Email

Addressees (see Service List)

**RE: Savage Solar Energy LLC's Proposed 2.75 MW Solar Project in Chester, VT
45-Day Notice of Petition to be filed with the Vermont Public Utility Commission**

Dear Persons and Entities Entitled to Notice,

Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248 and Public Utility Commission Rule 5.402, Savage Solar Energy LLC ("SSE") is pleased to submit the following pre-petition notice concerning its proposed 2.75 MW solar project ("the Project"), to be sited on a portion of a parcel of land located off Vermont Route 103 in Chester, Vermont, which SSE has an option to lease. SSE is owned by MHG Solar LLC, which has developed a number of projects in Vermont.

I. Introduction

SSE is preparing to file an application for a Certificate of Public Good ("CPG") with the Vermont Public Utility Commission ("PUC"), requesting approval to install and operate a 2.75 MW solar electric generation facility (the "Project"). The electricity from the Project will be delivered to Green Mountain Power ("GMP").

The remainder of this letter briefly describes: (1) the Project, including plans for construction; (2) the expected benefits of the Project; (3) the preliminary assessment of potential impacts; (4) the expected date a petition will be filed with the PUC; and (5) the rights of entities receiving this notice to comment on the Project in accordance with PUC Rule 5.402.

II. Project Description and Construction Plans

The 2,750-kW (alternating current, or "AC") solar electric generation facility will occupy 14 (±) acres on an approximately 26-acre parcel of land owned by H.M. Savage & Sons, Inc. off Route 103 in Chester, Vermont. The parcel does not currently have an Emergency 911 address. The Project will be accessed via a new access drive off Vermont Route 103. *See Location Map/Site Plan – Attachment A.*

The Project will consist of solar modules mounted on metal racks, string inverters, a pad-mounted transformer, electrical collector system components consisting of underground conduit, wire, AC combiner panel, and AC disconnects. A new access road will be added off Vermont Route 103 into the northwest portion of the Project site. The Project will be surrounded by a

minimum 7-foot high fence. Approximately three new project poles and a short overhead power line are proposed between the Project and a new proposed utility pole along Vermont Route 103, where the Project will interconnect to the GMP system.

A preliminary Site Plan is included in *Attachment A*. It illustrates the anticipated location of the Project's components in relation to the surrounding area. SSE chose the proposed location for this solar array based upon its solar exposure, accessibility to existing roads and three phase power lines, and its minimal impacts on natural resources and the character and aesthetics of the surrounding area.

While the attached site plan represents the current preferred layout, the layout that will be contained in the final application may vary somewhat based upon further engineering, environmental, or other siting considerations. The final layout will be within the overall site area where environmental and other impacts have been evaluated for the purposes of this 45-day notice. The basic parameters of the site plan include the following working assumptions:

- Construction will be performed in accordance with the Vermont Standards & Specifications for Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control February 2020.
- Year-round daily access to the array is not required. Therefore, no on-site septic or water supply systems will be constructed. The solar project's energy production will be monitored remotely and, if any abnormal conditions are detected, technicians will be dispatched as required.
- The solar array for the Project will be enclosed by a perimeter fence that will meet applicable electric safety code standards.

III. Site Access & Equipment Delivery

Standardized trucking methods will be used to transport the panels and other project components to the site. Typical tractor-trailer and box truck vehicles will be used to transport materials to the site for construction. The Project will not require any oversized loads. The new access drive on the parcel will be used for bringing in all construction-related equipment and machinery. Construction equipment will likely include a light duty crane or similar equipment to lift the transformer into place, trucks to move racking around the site, and a small trencher to install underground electrical wiring.

IV. Solar Panels and Electrical Collection System

The Project will utilize approximately 7,200 ($\pm$), 545-watt solar panels, or the equivalent, mounted on fixed tilt racking oriented due south. The solar panels will be raised so that the

bottom of the panels are 1' above the base flood elevation height, with a maximum top of panel height above the ground of 13 feet. All electrical equipment will be elevated so that the bottom of the equipment is 1' above the base flood elevation.

The panels will be arranged in rows running east-west and set out in arrays designed to minimize impacts to natural resources. The rows will be connected via a combination of underground and above ground electrical cable to string inverters, which convert the electricity from DC to AC. From the inverters, the electrical line will run to the transformers. GMP's existing distribution line along Vermont Route 103 will be tapped for the interconnection, and approximately four new utility poles will be installed as necessary to safely connect to the 3-phase grid.

The final selection of all equipment will be made after a CPG is issued and contractors and vendors are selected.

V. Project Benefits

The Project will provide economic benefits including: (i) payment of State educational and municipal property taxes; (ii) purchasing project equipment from Vermont businesses, when commercially feasible; and (iii) employing Vermont businesses for pre-application, construction, and operation and maintenance work, when commercially feasible.

In addition to these economic benefits, the proposed solar electric facility will also result in important environmental benefits. The 2020 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan set a goal for the State to receive 90% of its energy from renewable resources by the year 2050, and solar power is needed to meet that goal. The solar energy produced by this Project will result in less electricity needed in the New England region from plants that likely use fossil fuel. It will emit no air pollutants (including CO₂) in generating electricity, and thus will help in a small but measurable way to reduce global warming, acid rain, and the negative public health effects associated with the use of fossil fuel.

VI. Preliminary Impact Assessment

Based upon the initial review performed by SSE and its consultants, including review of the State's environmental databases, the siting of the Project will either entirely avoid, or not cause undue adverse impacts to environmental resources and will not create any public health or safety concerns. Key elements of our assessment include the following:

- The Project will largely utilize a corn field and has been sited to avoid impacts to Class II wetlands and buffers and any streams and other sensitive natural resources

whenever possible. See *Attachment A*. Where impacts will occur, they will be minimized and permit(s) obtained, if needed.

- A stream and wetland restoration area has been identified along the south-western border of the project.
- The Project site is located within the special flood hazard area (100-year floodplain) area and will be engineered to ensure that the solar panels are above base flood elevation and that fencing allows for water to easily pass underneath.
- Limited vegetation and tree clearing for the access road will be required (see *Attachment A*).
- No significant natural communities or critical wildlife habitat are known to exist within the Project footprint.
- The Project will be designed to meet electric safety and utility interconnection standards for safe and reliable operation of solar electric facilities.
- The Project will require no new municipal services and will not pose undue burdens on town fire, police, or water/sewer services. The Project will not impact the ability of the town to provide educational services.
- SSE's aesthetic consultant, T.J. Boyle Associates, LLC ("TJB"), a landscape architecture and planning firm, has performed a preliminary visual analysis of the proposed Project. Their analysis found that the Project site is largely screened from surrounding areas and roadways by existing vegetation and/or landform that surrounds the site, and existing trees and shrubs will remain around the proposed array. During leaf-off conditions, the surrounding existing vegetation will provide substantial screening of the proposed array from public locations. Based on conditions north and northeast of the site, some visibility of the proposed array may be possible from private properties, and landscape mitigation is proposed to screen the proposed structures from these properties (landscape locations indicated on *Attachment A*). Based on these considerations and the proposed landscape mitigation, the Project will not result in undue adverse impacts to the aesthetic and scenic and natural beauty of the area. TJB will complete a full aesthetic impact review for inclusion with the Petition for a CPG. Any impacts will be evaluated under the so-called Quechee Analysis and the need for potential mitigation will be further assessed based on this analysis.

VII. Expected Petition Filing Date with Vermont Public Utility Commission

SSE intends to file a Section 248 petition with the PUC soon after the 45-day notice period expires, which would be no sooner than August 25, 2025.

VIII. Comments to the Public Utility Commission & Additional Information about Section 248 Proceedings

Under 30 V.S.A. § 248(f)(1), the municipal and regional planning commissions may make recommendations to SSE within 40 days of this notice, and may convene a public hearing on the proposed Project. In addition, after SSE files its section 248 petition with the PUC, the planning commissions may make further recommendations to the PUC, to which the PUC will give due consideration. SSE's Petition will address any written comments provided to SSE in response to this letter or any oral comments at any public hearing convened by the planning commissions related to the Section 248(b) criteria. Recommendations made to the PUC pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(f)(1), or the lack of such recommendations, shall not preclude municipal and regional planning commissions and municipal legislative bodies from exercising their right to appear as parties pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(a)(4)(G)-(I).

For additional information regarding this process, including participation in the PUC proceeding, please refer to the PUC's "Public Participation and Intervention in Proceedings Before the Vermont Public Utility Commission" document, available on the website at <https://puc.vermont.gov/document/public-participationand-intervention-proceedings-public-utility-commission>. Information regarding the PUC's procedures for Section 248 proceedings can also be found on the PUC's website at <https://puc.vermont.gov/document/section-248-procedures>.

We here at SSE hope that you will support this Project given the benefits it will provide to the town and the State, and given its extremely limited impacts. In the meantime, I invite you to contact me with any questions or comments you have at the contact information below, as we welcome your input and suggestions to make this a successful project.

Sincerely,



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Enclosures:

Attachment A – Location Map and Site Plan

Attachment B—Certificate of Service

Attachment C—Statement of Compliance with Advance Notice Requirements