

**STATE OF VERMONT  
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

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| Petition of Northland Solar LLC for a Certificate of Public Good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248, authorizing the installation and operation of a 4.999 MW solar electric generation facility off Route 100 in Lowell, Vermont to be known as the “Northland Solar Project” | Case No. 25-2346 |
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**PREFILED TESTIMONY OF DOUGLAS AND DEBORAH MANNING  
On behalf of the Town of Lowell and Douglas and Deborah Manning**

March 13, 2026

**Exhibits:**

TL-DM-1 – Images and Photos

**Summary of Testimony:**

The Mannings address aesthetic impacts under **30 V.S.A. §248(b)(5)** and **10 V.S.A. §6086(a)(8)**, and provide evidence regarding the unsuitability of the proposed Northland Solar project site.

## **DIRECT PREFILED TESTIMONY OF DOUGLAS AND DEBORAH MANNING**

### **1 1. Identification**

2 **Q1.** Please identify yourselves.

3 **A1.** My name is **Douglas Manning**, and I represent myself and my wife, **Deborah Manning**. I  
4 am a Vermont-licensed Master Electrician and recently retired as the Director of Facilities at Jay  
5 Peak Ski Area. My wife is a retired social worker who previously worked for the Vermont  
6 Department of Health. We reside at **411 VT Route 58 East**, which directly borders and  
7 overlooks the proposed Northland Solar facility.

### **8 2. Description of Property**

9 **Q2.** Please describe your property.

10 **A2.** Our property consists of 17.2 acres accessed from VT Route 58. Our 4,500-square-foot  
11 home, built in 1996, was intentionally sited and designed to capture the western views of  
12 Belvedere Mountain, Jay Peak, and Hazen's Notch. These mountains are central to the property's  
13 aesthetics and enjoyment. See *Exhibit TL-DM-1, Figure 5*.

### **14 3. Relationship to Proposed Project**

15 **Q3.** Please describe your property in relation to the proposed project.

16 **A3.** The proposed project site lies directly below our home and within our primary viewshed.  
17 We built our home specifically for its scenic qualities and designed it with extensive west-facing

1 windows to capture the natural beauty of the area. We have spent our lives enjoying this  
2 landscape through wildlife observation, hunting, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing.

3 I have lived in this area for more than 57 years. I grew up across the road from the current  
4 location of our home, and my mother still resides there. This land has been central to our family  
5 for many years.

6 The project site serves as an important habitat and travel corridor for wildlife, including moose,  
7 black bear, whitetail deer, turkey, fox, coyote, bobcat, and many other species. The impacts will  
8 extend beyond the project parcel to surrounding properties as well. This location provides both a  
9 food source and a natural movement pathway for the animals that inhabit the area. See *Exhibit*  
10 *TL-DM-1, Figures 9, 10, 11, 12*

#### 11 **4. Suitability of the Site**

12 **Q4.** Is this not an appropriate location for a 4.999 MW solar facility?

13 **A.4** Based on my professional experience managing the construction of 7 MW solar projects in  
14 Essex Center, Milton, St. Albans, Ferrisburgh and many other smaller solar generation sites.  
15 Those projects were sited in areas with little or no visibility from residences or public buildings.  
16 The proposed Lowell site is on prime agricultural land and is surrounded on three sides by  
17 sensitive locations including residences, Route 58, the school, town offices, and Mountain View  
18 Cemetery. A project of this scale in this location is inconsistent with typical siting practices and  
19 creates an unavoidable and severe aesthetic impact. See *Exhibit TL-DM-1, Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 7.*

1 **5. Developer Outreach**

2 **Q5.** Did Northland Solar contact you about the project?

3 **A5** We received notice of a single public meeting, which we could not attend due to travel. I later  
4 spoke with Thomas Hand, but we did not receive the same information others received at the  
5 meeting. One meeting was insufficient for a project of this scale. The PUC process should ensure  
6 meaningful opportunities for affected residents to understand and respond.

7 **6. Comparison to Prior PUC Experience**

8 **Q6.** How does this application compare to Lowell's prior experience with PUC proceedings?

9 **A6.** Northland Solar evaluated this site for nearly two years with limited community  
10 engagement. This contrasts sharply with the Kingdom Community Wind process, where  
11 residents had multiple opportunities to ask questions and even vote for or against the project.  
12 Lowell is a small town with limited resources, making it vulnerable when facing well-resourced  
13 developers. The proposed site also contradicts the parent company's stated preference for  
14 industrial or reclaimed lands. A local business adjoining the site has already sold and relocated  
15 due to the project.

16 **7. Aesthetic Impact**

17 **Q7.** What aesthetic impact would the project have on your home?

18 **A7.** The project would dominate our viewshed, it is out of character with the area and would be  
19 shocking and offensive to anyone viewing it from our home. Because our home sits 60–80 feet  
20 above the site, no feasible vegetation can screen the array. Even if the fences were hidden, the

1 panels would remain fully visible. The solar project would be in the foreground and disrupt the  
2 views of the mountains in the distance; the impact would be permanent and severe. Our town  
3 plan states that this location is to be used for agricultural use only and the use of this location for  
4 an industrial-sized solar site goes completely against the intent of the town zoning plan.

5

## 6 **8. Glare Concerns**

7 **Q8.** Are you concerned about glare from the panels?

8 **A8.** Yes. Because the sun rises behind our home, panel reflections could be directed toward our  
9 residence. We request a formal glare analysis and manufacturer specifications demonstrating that  
10 glare will not impact on our home. We also request that a glare mitigation plan be created  
11 describing what will be done to address glare issues should glare be a problem.

## 12 **9. Mitigation Vegetation**

13 **Q9.** Are you concerned that mitigation plantings could block your mountain views?

14 **A9.** Yes. Any vegetation tall enough to screen the array would also obstruct our mountain views,  
15 creating a secondary adverse impact.

16

## 17 **10. Requested Action**

18 **Q10.** What action are you requesting from PUC?

1 **A10.** We request that the PUC deny the Certificate of Public Good due to the undue aesthetic  
2 impacts.

3

4 **11. Conclusion**

5 **Q11.** Does this conclude your testimony?

6 **A11.** Yes, but we reserve the right to supplement this testimony if additional issues arise.

