

PPRP's Fact Sheet – Massey Solar Project, Kent County

PSC Case Number 9407

Manager: Bob Sadzinski

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Project Overview:

Massey Solar, LLC (a subsidiary of Community Energy, LLC) has filed for a CPCN to construct and operate a 5.0 MW solar array in Kent County (Figure 1). The Project will occupy 55 acres of a 96-acre parcel near the village of Massey. Project components include:

- 21,000 photovoltaic (PV) modules and a racking system,
- DC to AC power inverters,
- Medium voltage transformers,
- Control & distribution cabinets,
- Medium voltage collection system,
- Project switchgear, and
- Other interconnection equipment

Figure 1: Project Location



Source: Massey Solar CPCN Application. **Not to Scale**

Figure 2: View of Project Site from Massey Road



Site Description

The Property address is 12200 Massey Road, Massey, MD 21650. Massey Solar has entered into a long-term lease agreement with the landowner. Agricultural fields occupy the proposed Project area (Figure 2). There is no tree or forest cover on the Property.

The Property is zoned employment center (EC). Utility scale solar projects are a permitted use in the EC district, subject to certain conditions related to glare, screening/buffering, structure heights, and public safety.

The Project site is located in a rural area surrounded by a mixture of agricultural, residential, and commercial/industrial use land. The proposed OneEnergy Blue Star Solar Project site and an existing hot-mix asphalt plant lie to the west of the Property.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

- No trees will be removed as part of the Project; however, afforestation mitigation will be required. PPRP recommends a license condition requiring the Applicant to consult with Kent County and comply with County requirements for afforestation mitigation.
- There are no records of rare, threatened or endangered species at the Property. PPRP has made the following recommendations with regard to providing for wildlife habitat as part of the Project:
 - Follow guidance from the Kent County Soil Conservation District for establishing and maintaining vegetation (in particular warm season native grasses),
 - Restrict mowing during ground-nesting bird season (May-August), and
 - Incorporate pollinator habitat into its grounds maintenance plan.
- Two small, isolated herbaceous non-tidal wetlands occur within the Project footprint. As proposed, the solar Project will avoid these two features and will maintain appropriate setbacks, as required by Kent County.

Economic and Fiscal

- The Project is expected to create 30-50 temporary design, management, and construction jobs.
- Economic benefits to the State and county will be primarily in the form of corporate income tax revenues.

- The Project will displace 55 acres of agricultural land use, but will not affect land use on surrounding properties.

Transportation

- Construction worker traffic and truck traffic for delivery of solar panels and other equipment will not affect the level of service on roads near the Project.
- During early stages of construction, some trucks transporting excavation equipment to the Project site may be oversized or overweight.
- Although the nearest airport (Massey Aerodrome Airport) is less than 2 miles away from the Project site, PPRP's independent assessment of potential glare impacts indicates that reflective glare from the Project will not have an adverse effect upon air navigation.

Visual impacts

- Landscape buffering that meets Kent County's Site Plan review requirements will mitigate views of the facility structures from adjoining public roads and properties.
- The Project will not create substantial light if its lighting plan satisfies Kent County's exterior lighting requirements.
- While the likelihood of glare trespass is minimal, PPRP recommends a license condition requiring the developer to document and address complaints related to potential solar reflections.

Cultural & Aesthetic

- The MHT has determined that no historic properties will be impacted by the Project.
- The Project site lies within the programmatic boundary of the Stories of the Chesapeake Cultural Heritage Area (CHA). PPRP consulted with Eastern Shore Heritage Inc., the Heritage Area's management unit, about the Project. Based on this consultation, PPRP concludes that the Project will not have an adverse effect upon cultural awareness or heritage tourism.
- No Maryland Scenic Byways bypass the Project site.
- Two on-road bicycle routes (the Historic County Loop and the Kent and Queen Anne's Loop) bypass the Project to the east and south, respectively.
 - Views of the Project site from these routes are either currently blocked by existing residences and other structures or will be altered from a view of agricultural land to a landscape buffer.
 - PPRP recommends a license condition to enhance the safety of cyclists that share the road with construction vehicles during the construction phase of the Project.

Public Service impacts

- PPRP recommends a license condition to ensure that the Project conforms to national fire and electrical codes and that emergency response protocols are in place in the unlikely event of a fire or other emergency.
- The Project's operation will not emit significant traffic, noise, air or water pollutants, or generate any hazardous waste that could potentially affect public health. At the end of the facility's useful life, a decommissioning plan will return the Project site to its original state. Thus, the Project will minimally affect the local environment and is unlikely to affect property values.

Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) impacts

- EMF levels, in particular magnetic field levels, from the proposed Project are projected to fall below threshold human health standards at a distance of 3 feet. The typical setback from adjacent homes is more than 55 feet.

CPCN Status

- CPCN Application filed on 11/9/15.
- A revised Procedural Schedule has been established; public hearings are scheduled for March 6 and the week of April 16, 2018. PPRP's direct testimony is due on March 22, 2018.
- For more current information, see: <http://www.psc.state.md.us/>