

Note:
This summary was last updated on **June 2, 2021**
For current information, follow this link:
[PSC Docket Case #9662](#)

Costen Solar
33001 Costen Road,
Pocomoke City, MD 21851
(Somerset County)
[PSC Case Number 9662](#)
PPRP Manager: Ginny Rogers

Note:
This summary is based on information provided in the CPCN Application dated **April 12, 2021** which is subject to change and has not yet been fully reviewed by PPRP

CPCN Timeline

CPCN Application filed on 12 April 2021
1st Public Hearing: 29 June 2021, Time and Location TBD
Applicant's Direct Testimony Due: 9 July 2021
Interveners' Direct Testimony Due: 14 October 2021
2nd Public Hearing: 19 October 2021, Time and Location TBD
PSC Evidentiary Hearing: 26 October 2021

Project Location:

The project will occupy approximately 58 acres of a 149 acre parcel. The property address is 33001 Costen Road, Pocomoke City (Figure 1).

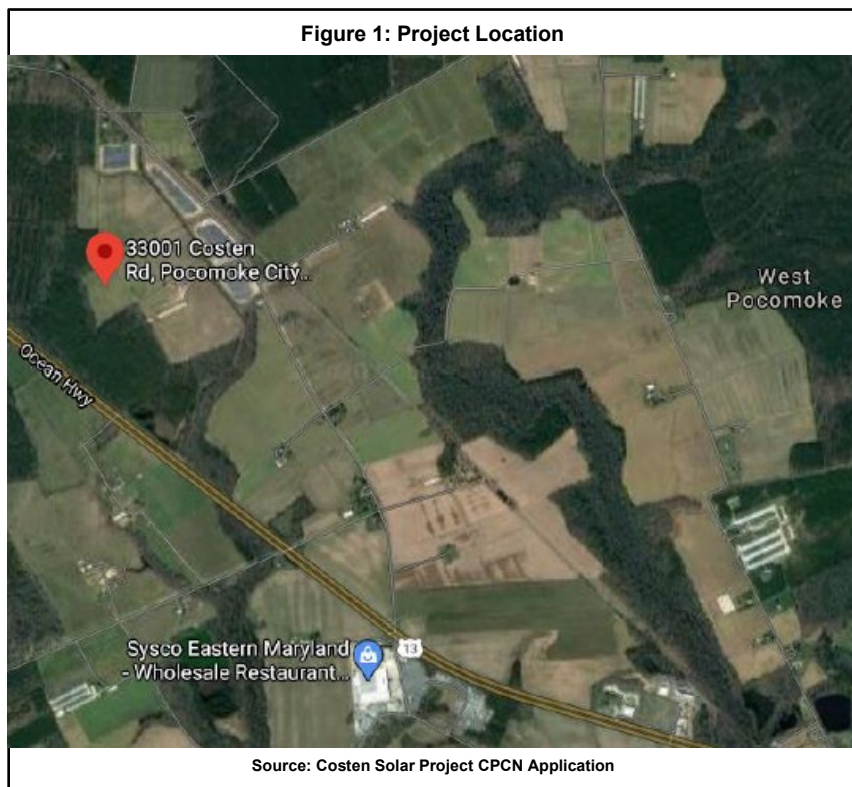
[Google Map Link](#)

Project Overview:

Costen Solar, Inc. has filed for a CPCN to construct a 10.625 MW solar facility.

Project components include:

- Approximately 34,216 photovoltaic (PV) modules mounted on a fixed-tilt racking system (maximum height of 9.6 feet and spacing of at least 13 feet are anticipated);
- 70 string inverters;
- A new interconnection to the Choptank Electric Cooperative's substation via directional drill or jack and bore from the property under Costen Road;
- Unpaved grass roads for access; and
- A minimum 6-foot high fence.



Site Description

The 149-acre project site includes agricultural fields and a few wooded areas outside of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. The site is surrounded primarily by forests and an adjacent solar facility (owned by Brookfield Renewables). The original property owner and developer planned three commercial sites to include a solar project site, a greenhouse project site, and a bio-reactor project site. The proposed project will be constructed on the site originally planned for a greenhouse project, and adjacent to the Brookfield-owned facility.

The project site is zoned Agricultural Residential (AR), where utility scale solar energy facilities are a permitted use. Most of the project site is considered Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

The highlights that follow are based on the applicant's Environmental Review Document (ERD) and subject to change.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

- The project is in the watershed of the Puncheon Landing Branch, which is a small tributary to the Lower Pocomoke River.
- The project is not located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.
- The United States Army Corps of Engineers determined that the project meets the terms and conditions for authorization under a Statewide General Permit.
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources original review for rare, threatened, and endangered species identified three sunfish in a downstream area of Puncheon Landing Branch (the current project has requested an updated evaluation and is currently awaiting response).
- The applicant will maintain agricultural ditches onsite and they will be outside the limits of disturbance.
- White clover will be incorporated into the seed mix for planting at the project site to enhance pollinator habitat in the area.

Economic and Fiscal

- The project is expected to create approximately 50 to 75 temporary design, management, and construction jobs.
- The project represents a capital investment of approximately \$17 million.
- Project construction is expected to begin in January/February 2022, last approximately 3 to 5 months and is expected to be completed by July 2022.

Land Use

- Surrounding land uses are agricultural, forest, and industrial.

Transportation

- Construction traffic will include deliveries of materials and heavy equipment via tractor-trailer, as well as daily traffic consisting of cars, trucks, and other personal vehicles.
- Project access will be via the existing entrance for the adjacent Brookfield-owned solar facility.
- During operation, traffic will be limited to quarterly to yearly maintenance and inspection crews.

Visual Impacts

- The project will be secured with a 6-foot high chain link fence.
- The proposed solar array layout will maintain a front yard setback of 40 feet, a side yard setback of 10 feet, and a rear yard setback of 30 feet. Most of the proposed array layout will be screened by an existing wooded area that surrounds three sides of the project. The landscape buffer around the existing adjacent Brookfield-owned solar facility will remain in place.
- The applicant's glare analysis indicates that the project will not create glare on nearby properties or public roads.
- The project is not located in close proximity to any airports.

Cultural & Aesthetic

- There are several Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties sites within approximately one mile of the project site. Communication from the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) indicates that these are outside of the project's estimated Area of Potential Effect (APE).
- The MHT has indicated that there are no archaeological sites within or adjacent to the project site and therefore has not required archaeological investigations.
- The MHT has requested Determination of Eligibility (DOE) forms for three identified properties. The Applicant reports they have submitted the DOE forms and are awaiting MHT response.

Public Service Impacts

- Water and sewer utilities will not be needed for the project.