

PPRP Fact Sheet – Union Bridge Solar Project, Carroll County

PSC Case Number 9483

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Last updated 18 June 2019

Project Overview

Citizens UB Solar, LLC has filed for a CPCN to construct and operate an 8.2 MW AC solar array in Carroll County (Figure 1). The Project site will occupy approximately 65 acres of a 195-acre parcel located in Carroll County southwest of the Town of Union Bridge, with a limit of disturbance for the Project of 34 acres. Project components include:

- Approximately 24,000 photovoltaic (PV) modules and fixed tilt racking system,
- An overhead line tap between the Carroll and Mt. Airy Substations, and
- 2 power inverters and transformers.

Note: The information summarized in this fact sheet is based on information provided in the Union Bridge Solar Project CPCN Application (including the Amended Environmental Review Document (ERD) dated 11 April 2019) and responses to PPRP Data Requests and does not reflect State agency reviews.

Site Description

The Project is located on South Main Street/Green Valley Road adjacent to the Potomac Edison Carroll Substation. The Project area includes the zoning designations Restricted Industrial (IR) and General Industrial (IG), where solar is a permitted use by right and no special exception is required. The site primarily consists of agricultural fields with several farm buildings onsite (Kilfadda Farm) and is surrounded by wooded areas and drainage features on the fringes of the property.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

- The Project's limit of disturbance lies outside of the Critical Area. Tributaries to Little Pipe Creek drain the area and eventually flow into the Potomac River, which is a major tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. These streams are classified as USE IV-P waters (Recreational Trout Waters and Public Water Supply).
- The Application indicates that no forested areas will be cut and that the few, isolated trees that will be removed will be offset by trees to be planted as part of the planned vegetative buffer. The Applicant states that the Project will therefore meet the "no net loss" requirement of the Forest Conservation Act and the Applicant intends to request an exemption from Carroll County afforestation requirements.
- There are no records of rare, threatened or endangered species at the Property.
- The Applicant intends to incorporate pollinator habitat into its grounds maintenance plan.
- Portions of the Project (exterior access roads and fencing will be located within the 100-year flood plain).

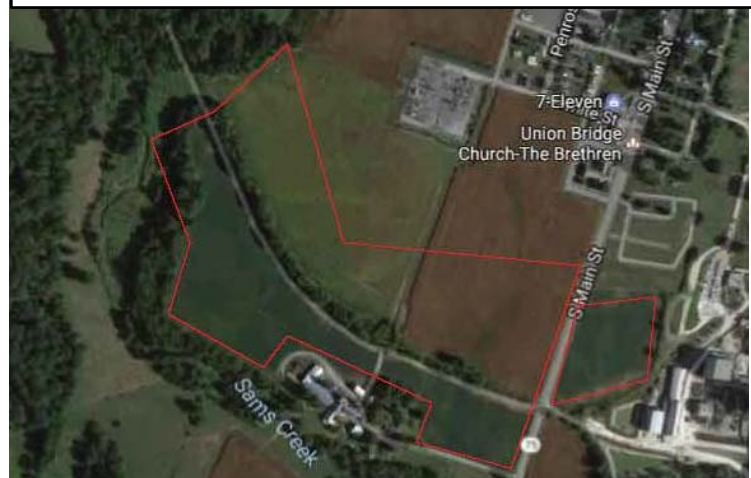
Economic and Fiscal

- The Application indicates that the Project is expected to create approximately 40-60 temporary design, management, and construction jobs.
- The Application indicates that the Project represents a capital investment of \$15 million.

Transportation

- During construction, equipment will be delivered by tractor-trailer. Excavation and other heavy equipment that may be used include front loaders, dump trucks, concrete trucks, excavators, trenching equipment, backhoes, post installation equipment, and other similar

Figure 1: Project Location



Source: Union Bridge Solar Project CPCN Application (Amended Environmental Review Document).

vehicles and equipment. Daily construction traffic will include pickup trucks and other personnel vehicles.

- After construction, traffic will mostly be limited to maintenance crews for seasonal mowing and vegetation purposes. Quarterly to yearly maintenance on the solar array and periodic site visits for operations issues may also occur.

Visual Impacts

- A 50-foot buffer of indigenous shrubs, trees, and grass plantings is planned along both sides of South Main Street where the Project is adjacent to the street.
- The Applicant has engaged a certified/licensed Landscape Architect to design a landscape buffer for the Project.

Cultural and Aesthetic

- The Applicant has communicated with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) and received response indicating that the Project is located in an area of interest.
- MHT requested a Phase 1 archeological survey report of the project site and a National Register Determination of Eligibility (DOE) submission for the Kilfadda Farm complex. MHT also noted its concern over the Project's potential adverse effect on the nearby National Register-listed Union Bridge Historic District and recommended additional landscape screening buffers to mitigate views of the panels.
- A Phase 1 Cultural Resource Survey dated February 2019 and the requested DOE submission was included in the Amended ERD submitted by the Applicant and has been provided to the MHT for review. The survey identified four isolated archaeological sites within the Project area, but noted that they were not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and recommended that no further investigations were warranted.

Public Service Impacts

- Water and sewer utilities will not be needed for the Project.
- The Project must be reviewed by the Carroll County Planning Commission for compliance with relevant local regulations.

CPCN Status

- CPCN Application filed on 6/8/18.
- The first Public Comment Hearing was held on 10/18/18.
- Applicant provided direct testimony on 10/26/18.
- The Procedural Schedule was suspended on 12/21/18.
- Applicant filed an Amended ERD on 4/12/19.
- A revised Procedural Schedule was issued on 4/29/19.
- For more current information, see: <http://www.psc.state.md.us/>