

Dirk:

Good evening, everyone, and welcome. My name is Dirk. I am a moderator for Access Live. The town has asked Access Live to facilitate this live, interactive, virtual town board meeting. The town board is holding this event to provide the chance to hear directly from the public wherever you are. This evening, we'll be discussing the draft developer agreement for the Wood County Solar Project. As I mentioned, this is an interactive forum and we'll be taking as many public comments and questions from participants as we possibly can live on this event. If you have joined this meeting by phone and you have a comment or question, you can press star three on your phone keypad at any time, and you'll be placed in line to speak with a member of Access Live staff. They'll take down your name and a brief overview of your question. Then the next time you hear your name, you will be live on the call and able to ask your question directly.

Dirk:

If you are listening to the audio of this meeting through the website, you can simply type your name and question below the audio only streaming player on your screen. Go ahead now and turn it over to Chairman Rickeby to start the meeting.

Carey Rickeby:

Good evening. This is Chairman Rickeby. We'll open this meeting to questions and stuff to Savion, and if you, Heidi, could do the roll call for the town board, I'd appreciate it.

Heidi:

Sure. So we have Carey Rickeby.

Carey Rickeby:

Yes.

Heidi:

He's present. Okay. Doug Pasanov.

Doug:

Yes.

Heidi:

Patty Hinks.

Patty:

Yes.

Heidi:

Rhonda Corral, and Rhonda, you are on the line?

Rhonda:

Yes. Present.

Heidi:

Wonderful. And Joshua McDonald. [inaudible 00:02:08] Joshua, are you on the line?

Joshua:

Yes, I am.

Heidi:

Okay. Wonderful. All the members are present.

Carey Rickeby:

Thank you, Heidi. So, we're going to open it up for questions.

Dirk:

Okay. Just as a reminder to everyone that is participating on this call that we'll be speaking during this call, all of our lines joined the call live. So if you wouldn't mind, please muting your phone if you are a host during this call. Now, let's talk about how you can get a question in. If you have a question or a comment that you would like to make. If you're listening to this call on your telephone, please press star three on your telephone keypad at any to get into the question or comment queue. That's where a member of our staff will collect your comment or question and we'll then bring you live onto the call. If you are listening through the streaming player on the website, you can simply enter your name and question below the streaming player. So, again, if you're listening to this call and you would like to make a comment or ask a question and you're on your telephone, please press star three. If you're on the website, simply enter your name and question below the streaming player.

Dirk:

So, would it be something you'd like to do right now, group? Go to online questions. I do have a few that have popped up into the queue. All right. So, a question was submitted by Bill Likesnum, who will be answering resident's questions.

Larry:

This is Larry Tonnepake. Can everyone hear me?

Dirk:

Yes, sir. I hear you.

Larry:

Okay. I'll take that question, and for those of you who aren't familiar with me, I'm the attorney for the town on this project. I'd start by saying somebody has the cutest sounding baby in the background and they need to mute themselves, but it's almost a shame to ask you to do that because that's probably the best sound we'll get all night, but I'll answer that question. And I don't know, I guess we need a little bit more information, and Bill obviously has figured out how to type in, actually, you should clarify that for

me, moderator Dirk. Did bill type that question in, or was that a question that he posed through the phone and it was queued up.

Dirk:

So, that is an online question submission. That's why we have his name and the question next. Som this came through the online system.

Larry:

Yeah, and I guess I would just ask Bill to clarify if he means who's going to be answering residents questions tonight. The answer is there's a host of hosts of this meeting on the town side and the developer side. Primarily Drew Gibbons at Savion is the key person. And he will be, I guess, assigning certain questions to the rest of their team. We also have myself who I worked on obviously considerably on the developer agreement and then at least three of our town board members who have been at least involved in the process of setting up the towns ordinance and then have been at least aware of the discussions with Savion over the last month. So, it depends on the question, but we've got a lot of people to answer them.

Dirk:

All right. Thank you very much. We'll move on to another online question submitted by Bill Likesnumb, will environmental concerns be addressed? Again, since I'm not hearing anything coming across my phone system, just as a reminder for all of the hosts that if you did place your phone in mute as a courtesy, please make sure that you unmute your phone before answering.

Larry:

This is Larry again. I think the reason we're not seeing any answers is because maybe Bill could clarify that question again. Are we going to address environmental concerns tonight? Certainly, I think that this is your opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions about environmental issues. It is an opportunity of which there have been a number and will be a number. I think I'd look for a little more specificity in the question beyond that.

Dirk:

Okay, Larry, thank you. Moving on to another question submitted by Bill Likesnumb. If this virtual meeting is a hoop that Savion must jump through to gain PFC approval of their project, will the current draft DA be discussed? Or when will residents be able to do that?

Heidi:

And Larry here again. If the question is what's to be discussed tonight, the answer is the draft DA, or development agreement. That's the topic of this evening. So, any questions, comments, concerns that people have, compliments, which in our line of work doesn't happen much, but you never know, any comments or thoughts of any kind that people have would be welcome this evening. And I would say to the first part of that question, no, this is not a hoop that Savion must jump through to gain PFC approval. This is part of the town's process in evaluating whether or not to engage in an agreement. We're using the name Savion and wood County Solar project interchangeably here, but Wood County solar has to, I'm sorry, this is part of the town's process, not the PFC process.

Dirk:

Okay, and as a reminder, if you have a question that you would like to ask live during this call, and you're listening to this call on your telephone, you simply need to press star three on your telephone key pad in order to enter the queue, to ask your question live on this call. We are currently going through online questions. Online questions have been submitted from folks listening through the streaming player on the website and are submitting their name and question below the audio streaming player. So, I have a question in front of me submitted by Dave Barth, and that question is, in exhibit B of the highway use agreement, what resolution system is in place. If there are objections?

Heidi:

That time the pause was only because I couldn't get to my button. This is Larry about that. The highway use agreement has a couple of provisions, just some minor components in which there's an agreement that has to be reached and in time [inaudible 00:10:21] of the developer. In particular, there's a requirement that before construction begins, the developer of the Wood County Solar project is required to assess the condition of the two route town road segments that would be part of their approved route. And then after construction, they're required to assess that again and then provide, basically the town and the developer will seek to sort of agree on what improvements are going to be required to bring the town roads from their then current condition back to at least the condition they were in when the construction started, or better. There isn't a process laid out in here for if there's disagreement, but it's a pretty straightforward engineering calculation. There's not a lot of opinion that goes into it. And so, we were comfortable. We do have to agree, but there's not a lot of subjectivity there.

Doug:

And Larry, could I add to that? This is Doug here. What I would think you would do is walk the road either with the personnel from the town and then somebody from your group there. I would think that would be the way we would start on that. That would be through video or some other source like that.

Dirk:

All right. Hearing no additional information or comments, moving on to the next online question. This one was submitted by Tanya Kraus, And the question is without lawyers being present have town board members and Savion representatives discuss the development?

Larry:

This is Larry. You wouldn't really want the attorney to answer the question about when lawyers weren't present, but the town board is actually precluded from having those kinds of discussions with the developer without it occurring in the public sphere. So, this meeting and previous meetings that have been hosted are the only instances in which the full town board has been engaged with any big discussions with the developer.

Dirk:

Thank you for taking that question. Now we're going to move to a couple of calls that have come in. And again, if you have a question that you would like to ask live during this call, and you're listening to this call through your telephone, you simply need to press star three on your telephone keypad, and that will

get you through to our question and comment queue. So, we're moving forward. Our first person joining us, Thor Lacey, is this you?

Thor:

Yes.

Dirk:

Welcome to the call. Go ahead with your question, please.

Thor:

From the solar project, the power that's going to be generated, will any of it be used in Saratoga or Wisconsin Rapids?

Drew Gibbons:

So, this is Drew Gibbons from Savion. Can you hear me?

Thor:

Yes.

Drew Gibbons:

Good, because I couldn't hear it before. Larry, I'm going to assume that's one you'd want Savion to address, but feel free to jump on. So, we're thanking you for the question. So, the answer is yes, if you use locally, to the extent possible. So, what happens is when power's injected on the grid, in this case, the ATC line, the system operators directed where to go. Typically they'll direct it locally where energy use is available because it's cheaper to send it shorter distances. To the extent it's not needed locally, it'll be sent elsewhere. So, yes, the energy will be used locally, but how much and when, it's up to the system operator.

Dirk:

Thank you very much for taking that question. Let's go to another caller. We've got Peter Urban joining us now. Welcome to the call. Peter. Go ahead with your question please.

Peter:

Yeah. My question again, refers to whether this power be used locally and I'm just so glad that seeing that this CAFO didn't come in. So, thank you guys so much, but yeah, it should be used locally. Just part of my question.

Drew Gibbons:

So, Peter, this is Drew again and Larry, just feel free to just say, "Drew, will you address it?" Just so I know that I'm not just jumping in, but yeah, Peter, thank you for your question and your comment, and yeah, the response is the same as the Thor's question, which is the line will be injected in the ATC line and the energy will be injected into that ATC line. And then the system operator will direct you where to go and it's a lower cost to keep it local. So, there will be power used locally.

Dirk:

All right, I'm going to move back over to a couple of online questions, or at least, for the time being, we do have a few more people being screened right now in the question queue for live questions. Again, if you would like to ask a question or you have a comment that you'd like to make, and you're listening to this conversation on your telephone, please press star three to enter the question and comment queue. If you are listening through the website in our streaming audio player, you can enter your question below the streaming player by typing your name and question below that player. Just like Thomas Burkwall did, and from Thomas, online question, or statement actually. Distance for lot line. I'm going to add it as a question. So, is there a distance for lot line?

Larry:

Drew, I would leave you to start that one. I can add on if you'd like.

Drew Gibbons:

Sure. Yeah, I will. I'll take that. I'm going to guess, Larry, this is talking about the development agreement. Number 10 of development agreement addresses a buffer from our project fence to existing residences. So, what this development agreement would require the project to do is leave in at least 50 feet of existing live trees from the project property boundary to the project fence. In reality, in many cases, we're going to leave in much more than that. Really all we need from our project sense to the trees is about 10 feet for on foot or ATV access outside the fence for maintenance. So, in most cases, it's going to be much more than that to [inaudible 00:18:10] , but that is the minimum requirement from the development agreement.

Rhonda:

I have a question that pertains to that. This is Rhonda Corral. I am aware that Savion have actually talked with some residents about the fact that they would probably allow for a 350 foot buffer from the lot lines, and I am wondering if that can also be worked into the developer's agreement. That, that is a possibility.

Carey Rickeby:

Rhonda, thanks for the follow up question, and I think that goes to the second part of the development agreement there, number 10, which it says, for any owner of an existing residence that's within 500 feet of the project perimeter fence, that the project was required to work with that, I'm not reading it word for word here, work with that land owner to retain existing vegetative buffer and discuss other cost effective ways to supplement it with existing vegetation as necessary. So, maybe that's not exactly what you're asking, but what I would say is what we've talked to folks about is, based on our current design, here's the amount of trees that would be left in place. I know that I've provided that information to a couple of folks recently, somewhere in that 300 to 400 foot of trees and also provided them a visual simulation, similar to what we shared with the town back in January of what it would look like.

Carey Rickeby:

So, what I would say is the development agreement protects residents in that you get at least 50 feet, and if you're within 500 feet of the project fence, then we're required to work with you on retaining the existing buffer or supplementing it as necessary.

Dirk:

Okay. Therefore it does not need to be a part of the developer's agreement. It does not need to be written in, in that form.

Drew Gibbons:

I guess, Rhonda, I'd let Larry chime in there. I would say that it's covered from a couple angles here, but Larry, what are your thoughts on that?

Larry:

Well, Rhonda, would you repeat the actual language that you were asking about?

Rhonda:

Essentially, I was asking if it needed to be written into the developer's agreement specifically that some residents have been told that they could have, as drew said, between 350 and 400 feet buffer. I just did not know if it needed to be written into the developer's agreement that this was agreed upon.

Carey Rickeby:

Yeah, well, what your question really boils down to is, is it enforceable if a developer or a purchaser of the project would decide to not follow through with those promises, right?

Rhonda:

That's correct. Thank you.

Larry:

So, I do think that, yeah, I do think that if those promises have been made and if a resident wanted to make sure that they were enforceable, we would want that to either be in the developer agreement or a separate agreement with that landowner or in some way memorialized so then at least you had a circumstance in which everyone had a chance to look at the actual wording of what was agreed upon to make sure that there isn't any misunderstanding, and then that there would be some enforceability. I think that it would be preferable from my perspective as the town's advisor, that any individual property owner promises an agreement between those property owners and the developer would be something that would be memorialized individually without involving the town, because I wouldn't want to put in different provisions for specific land owners in a general agreement.

Rhonda:

Thanks, Larry.

Dirk:

Hearing nothing further in regards to this last question, here's the next question that was submitted online by Bob. Concerned about speed limit approaching the landing zone with equipment Range Line.

Larry:

Maybe one of the town board members might have some information about what that speed limit is. On Range Line, I'm not aware of that. If we could start with that and then talk about site distances and what the concerns might be with that turn off or turn it.

Terry:

This is Terry. Can you hear me?

Larry:

Yes.

Terry:

Yeah. I think I believe that's a 45 until you get down by the area that they're going to be into. So, I would say it's going to probably be 45 at that point.

Larry:

How are the site distances along that road, Terry?

Terry:

Sight distance is good because what you do, there's one Hill actually that goes over the Seven Mile Creek. Once you come up there, it's pretty much straight. So, sight distance is good.

Larry:

So, I guess without additional information from Bob, maybe Bob could, if we didn't cover what his concern was, maybe he can type that back in and we can come back to it, but it sounds like the speed limit isn't excessive and the sight distances are good for turning. We also know that the construction is generally going to be based on the developer agreement. It's generally going to be conducted during daylight hours, which helps also. Obviously, there's inclement weather at times, but it sounds like that's something that doesn't raise unusual concerns in terms of traffic safety.

Dirk:

Next we'll segue back to the telephone call. We've got the Teresa Bronc joining us on the line. Welcome to the call, Teresa. Go ahead with your question, please.

Teresa:

Thank you and good evening, everyone. My question actually relates to the overall general viability of the project. On a US average basis, there's 205 sunny days. As much as we love Wisconsin Rapids, it has in the neighborhood of only 188 sunny days. So, my question is really whether or not this project should even be considered in defacing the 1800 plus acres for a site that is 10% below average sunny days. I just raised whether or not this should even be within the area. So, it's a statement, but also a general question.

Doug:

Larry, I'm trying to sit on my hands until you direct it to me, but I'm guessing this is one for Savion here. So, I guess I'll start at the end there. The project has little bit over 1600 acres under control. The project footprint itself will be about 1200 acres. As far as the production and the number of sunny days in the area, what we do when we develop a project like this is early on, we'll put a MET station, or weather station in the site, on the side or in the area to measure the solar resource. In this case, we also put a, and I'm going to pronounce it wrong, I'm sure, but an albedometer or an albedometer, which also measures the rays beams activity off the ground. And the reason we do that is because in the Midwest and places like Wisconsin, when it snows, there is sun that reflects off on those days, and the panel technologies that exist now, they're called by facial panels that have solar cells on the backside as well. But the overall response is that this is measured over 12 to 18 months.

Doug:

So, we have a really good picture of the very specific solar resource on this site and that goes into our models when we project the energy that will be produced and therefore whether the project is economically viable.

Dirk:

So, again, as a reminder, this is a live interactive virtual town board meeting. If you have a question or a comment that you would like to make simply press star three on your telephone keypad to enter the question and comment queue if you're listening to this conversation across your telephone. If you are listening to this conversation from the audio streaming player on the website, you can enter your name and question below the streaming player. So, it looks like an online question was also submitted by Teresa Bronc. Why is Church Street's existing power plant not being utilized? Doing so would minimize overall property defacing.

Drew Gibbons:

All right. I gave it a three count there, Larry. So, I'll jump in again, but feel free to take part.

Larry:

I have no idea the answer to that question.

Drew Gibbons:

All right. I'm just trying to let you direct traffic, but yeah, I'm happy to jump in. So, I think what's being asked about here is there's a Saratoga substation is up near Church Avenue, and that's a little Northwest of where we're intersecting the project. We're currently at our point of interconnection. That Saratoga substation, it's old infrastructure where the line that we're in a to doesn't actually run into that substation, it runs over it, and that substation couldn't be easily expanded without rebuilding and having extremely expensive upgrades that could be passed on to rate payers. In addition, interconnecting that site into that substation, even if it were feasible from an economic perspective, there's several houses nearby. So, to minimize local impact, it made sense to avoid that as well.

Dirk:

Moving on to another online question/ this question was submitted by Gail Kretschmer. The question is, is Savion's lawyer present?

Drew Gibbons:

Again, this is Drew. I'll answer that. The answer is no. So, I think this was intended to be a town board meeting to accept public comment on the draft development agreement. So, the town board is in attendance as well as the town's council, and Savion is here to answer any questions that come our way, but our attorney is not on the line.

Dirk:

All right. Segwaying back to a live caller. We've got Peter Urban joining us again. Peter. Welcome back. What is your question, sir?

Peter:

Yes, I was wondering if wallflowers would be pointed underneath the solar structures and I totally agree with the project. It's a heck of a lot better than what our options were in the past, and also, to Teresa Bronc, yeah, that's not a power plant there. It's just a substation on Church. Okay. Done.

Drew Gibbons:

So, Larry, this again looks like one that's project-related. So, I'll take this one. I think it's a good opportunity because I think I will direct us to one of the subject matter experts on the line from our team. So, I'll just quickly introduce the other folks we have on besides myself. So, I'm Drew Gibbons. I'm a senior director of development and one of the developers working on this project. We're also joined by Mark Mowesburger, a director of development who's one of the lead developers as well. Emily [inaudible 00:32:21] is also on the line, our VP of permitting and environmental. Harrison Nets, the engineering lead on the project. Chad Craven, the transmission lead. As well as Chris Pecar, who's a with Stantec and he's a consultant on the environmental side. So, to repeat the question, the question was, will there be wild flowers planted under the panel? And Chris, if you're not on mute, I will direct it at you. I mean, my understanding at a high level is that we do have areas outside the panels that we have a vegetative management plan for that maybe you can speak to. Is that something you can address?

Chris:

Yeah. I'm happy to take it. Can you hear me okay?

Drew Gibbons:

Yes.

Dirk:

Yes, sir.

Chris:

Great. Okay. We did create a preliminary vegetation management plan that calls for a mix of native and non native grasses and sedges to be planted within the primary paneled areas. So, under the panels and in between the panels. We will look for opportunities to include patches of pollinator friendly habitat, which will include again, native grasses and sedges along with native wild flowers that are local to the area.

Dirk:

Thank you very much for providing that information. Let's now go back to the phone. We've got Arlene Walker joining us now. Arlene-

Speaker 1:

We've got Arlene Walker joining us now. Arlene, welcome to the call. You have a comment?

Arlene Walker:

Yes, I do. Actually two, particularly. One regarding of the woman who had called about the viability, even of the solar farm itself. And there was mentioned to me, even from the gentlemen from the PSC, something about the Minnesota solar farm, and it's not even as big as ... Anyway. The point is, is that that Minnesota solar farm only produced 20% of the time because obviously at night, these panels are not collecting energy, besides the fact of clouds and ice and rain and all of the whatever, you know ... affecting the panel itself. But there was a study done in Germany were, which is similar to our climates. And they were saying that they only produce 17% of their projected capacity. And at some point they then would have to even draw on the grid to keep up maintenance. So I really do question the viability here.

Arlene Walker:

And the other question ... the comment I had was regarding the herbicides Savion plans to be using here. There's three different types, I understand. And we have a water table, according to the PSC, of between eight to 20 feet deep. And to be applying this massive amount of herbicides over this large area and with rain or whatever, and the snow that we get, I can't believe that it wouldn't get into the soil and down into the water table fairly quickly. And like I told the gentleman at that one open house, if it shows up in the well, it's already too late. And considering all of us being surrounded by this solar farm and discussing the distances and everything.

Arlene Walker:

And the other comment I have is I don't think people realize the tremendous amount of upheaval that's going to be going on. There was something I read about a 350,000 pound ... I don't know what it was. A battery or a station or whatever, that's going to be moved in here from the nearest port, and the damage to the roads is just mind boggling. But herbicide and the production of energy from these panels, I think might be not quite as much as everybody's projecting.

Larry:

I think the question's done. Thank you. This is Larry. I think I'll start with the viability question. It's a good thing to hear. Drew, if you are a member of your team want to talk about how you determine a site's viability. It kind of relates to what we were talking ... the previous question about the solar resources in the area. I think that would be helpful to all of us. I would also remind people that it's not something that we can use as a town, as a basis for the town's decision making. But I think it would be interesting. And then if you wouldn't mind also touching on what kind of herbicide applications you plan to use. And also a point that the caller brought up that I think has come up quite a few times, and I can't remember whether we've pinned it down, but whether or not there's going to be battery storage or any other large energy storage type facilities that were just referenced.

Drew Gibbons:

Sure, Larry, I will get started on that. And I took notes here, but I will try to address all of them. So I did also take and do ... There was a question about the production of the project, and I can talk to that. You wanted to take a step back and just talk about how the site is selected. I'll certainly do that. Wanted to talk about herbicides. And then there was kind of a dual question there about batteries. And I think really that the root of the question was on road damage, but I'll certainly address both. So I guess I see four things there.

Drew Gibbons:

I'll start by taking a step back, like you asked and say, "You know, what do we look for when we're evaluating a site like this?" So it starts with, one, there needs to be projected interest in utility scale solar from either utilities in the state or companies or corporates. Once that demand is there, we start doing an analysis of the transmission grid, high voltage lines and substations to see where there might be points to inject a project of a utility scale size. Once we determined that we then start looking for land owners who may be willing to or might be interested in participating. Once that comes together, and that's all early stage.

Drew Gibbons:

And I guess I should start out by saying, from the start of the concept of a project and what [inaudible 00:39:08] might make sense to actually putting a shovel in the ground can take two to five years. So when we get to that stage, when we've identified a point of interconnection, we have a landowner that we have an agreement with for site control, then we usually submit our interconnection application and we progress there. The engineers of the utility study the project and how much it would cost to interconnect. And depending on that cost, the project could end there. So if there's negative results, it's too costly, could be something to walk away from. In this case, that wasn't the case. And then we usually look to have some sign of commercial interest, and that was the case with this project. And then we go public with the project, which we did in September of 2019, and we move forward with permitting. So that's the high level process.

Drew Gibbons:

Back to the other question about solar projects. I mean, admittedly, solar projects don't shine at ... the sun doesn't shine at night, so there's no power generated at night. And that, I think this will lead into the question about batteries, but the purpose of solar projects from utilities perspective is to take ... During the peak times of the day, when energy use is highest, middle of the day to early afternoon, that's when the sun is shining the brightest and solar projects can take pressure off the grid and allow more expensive resources like natural gas peaker plants to not be deployed. And this is something that utilities are very good at, doing this analysis. I can tell you, solar is a part of their business plan, based on procurement reasons, or just based on wanting diversity. And like I just described, as far as taking pressure off the grid during peak times of the day, but also because it's cost competitive with conventional forms of energy at this point.

Drew Gibbons:

As far as herbicides. Yeah. There was a mention of groundwater and groundwater testing is tied into this development agreement that we're here to talk about tonight. But per the environmental studies, this project is expected to have no negative impact on groundwater. The project's panels and trackers are

not hazardous and no hazardous solutions will be used to clean the panels. As far as herbicides, after construction the site will be seeded with a low growth grass seed mix under the panels. And a pollinator seed mix will be planted in select areas, open areas outside of the array and inside the fence line. Noxious weeds and invasive species will be managed through mowing and through targeted applications of commercially available herbicides, but after site visitation is established, the project will not use broad applications of herbicides.

Drew Gibbons:

And then I guess I'll end by talking about batteries and road damage. So I think the question that was raised was will there be something delivered, like a big battery or something that will cause road damage. So, on road damage, I think we talked about this earlier, but in the development agreement that is covered. There is a, I'm not going to think of the right title of it, but there is a highway use agreement that requires us to make road repairs during construction and then work with the town during operations as well for any damage.

Drew Gibbons:

But as far as battery specific. Specifically, this project does not currently include batteries as a part of its by plan, as a part of the development. And the state permit application, the CPCN, there was an area reserved, a reserve area, for battery storage, for their potential. For the future. But that's not currently a part of the project. That's something we do typically in permit applications all over the country because batteries and storage is really a part of the future of renewable energy. Really, for that reason that the sun doesn't shine at night. But that's currently not a part of the plan for the project here. And that would be a separate process in the future.

Speaker 1:

All right, again, as a reminder, if you have a question or a comment that you would like to make and you're listening to this conversation via your telephone, simply press *3 on your telephone keypad at any time to get into the question and comment queue. If you're listening to this conversation through the website, you can enter your name and question below the audio streaming player. So again, *3 if you'd like to speak live on the call, or if you're listening through the website, enter your name and question below the streaming player.

Speaker 1:

Teresa Bronck wrote another question in from online. And the question is, "What is the planned setback for the power plant?"

Larry:

This is Larry. I'll jump in on that to give Drew a chance to catch his breath. There isn't a power plant here in the sense of coal fired or natural gas fired or even renewables fired power plant. It is a passive system solar array. So from the closest, I'm still trying to be helpful in the answer here, there's a project fence that's required around the site. Inside of that project fence, there is at least a 50 foot buffer between that project fence and ... I'm sorry between the project boundary and the array. And so I guess if you're going to say that if the closest thing we would have to a setback here would be that the plans that have been developed by Wood County Solar and provided to PSC show a little bit more detail about where the actual footprint of those solar panels would be. And that's all available on the town's website.

Larry:

Actually, all of the information we're talking about is available on the town's website or by request of the town. If you want to reach out to the town, if you're not comfortable going through the website, that's fine. That information can be provided upon request.

Drew Gibbons:

And Larry, thank you for that. I'll just tack on that, you did exactly what I did. I was going to say that the project footprint and design is available on the town's website and just to provide the information on setbacks. We talked about the 50 foot requirement in the development agreement, as far as leaving trees in place. But if you're looking at that current design, it's currently from the fence line to the road right away, specifically looking at Range Line Road, it's about 65 feet setback. It's over a hundred feet on all the other sides. And on the Southern boundary, there are some areas that are over 500 feet and there's one area in the North as well, similarly.

Speaker 1:

All right. Another online question. This one comes from Gail Kretschmer. How specifically is the DA protecting our water?

Larry:

Great question. This is Larry. I would say there's a number of provisions in the development agreement that ... the draft development agreement, that relate to providing either information necessary to take action if there were water impacts, or specifically and more directly regulating activities such that problems won't be found or won't occur. So the first is ... Many of these provisions relate indirectly to water quality, even the requirements for relatively immediate decommissioning can certainly relate to water quality. If you don't have old equipment weathering on site, if somebody walks away. But there's a groundwater monitoring plan requirement.

Larry:

And I think we have another question that's in the queue, if it hasn't come up already about what types of testing will be done under that plan. And for those of you following along on the agreement, this is page four, number six. The development agreement, at this point, doesn't specify other than the concept that there will be a monitoring plan, and then that monitoring plan will be executed. So this agreement leaves open some of the details about what will be in that plan. And in particular, what we would anticipate is that the testing that would occur would be directly in line with some of the types of chemicals that might be used. In particular, what type of herbicide is used? That might be something we seek to have included in the monitoring plan.

Larry:

To be honest with you ... this is a good part of what this meeting is about because with this kind of a project, there's a very few obvious, as a matter of regular activity, chemicals that hit the ground. And so it's something that I think the town is looking for guidance and ideas about what could be included on that list. But at the same time, it has to be reasonably linked to what is at least possible given this type of a use. So I would envision, for instance, a discussion we would have about what kinds of broad spectrum herbicides would be used, and maybe add that to the list. Otherwise, I think both sides were

anticipating continuing the types of groundwater monitoring that have occurred already in these wells. Yes, that was mostly focused on preparing background information for the anticipation of there being large farming activities on the site. But the list will have to relate to actual activities conducted, but it's still open for interpretation. Or, sorry, for development of that list.

Rhonda Coral:

I have a quick question as follow up. This is Rhonda Coral. How was the five year mark determined for the monitoring Savion or Alliant or whomever has the project at that point, how was that five year mark determined? And why would it not be for the life of the project?

Larry:

This is Larry again. The town ... It was our recommendation. We requested five years. The reason it wouldn't be for the life of the project is because, as the town knows, because it's been carrying this cost itself, it's expensive. And we hoped to have some contribution from the developer on this topic. And as we reviewed all of the comments from some of the interested groups and others as we worked through the last few months, the concerns that we heard were related to some activities that won't be occurring after the first, probably six months, much less the first five years. And that's broad application of herbicides and the kind of construction related activity that could bring on site and involve activities that could potentially have an impact.

Larry:

So it was a combination of those things, that once the panels are in and sitting in status and there isn't much going on on a day to day basis at the site, that that would be less critical after that point. But primarily it's a request really of the developer to engage with the town on this and contribute. And the request was not made to ask them to cover it for that long.

Rhonda Coral:

Thanks, Larry. I, it is my understanding, from listening to the conversation this evening, that there is that possibility that the project might develop into battery storage or the 10 semitrailer sized buildings that would contain battery storage. And that would also be another concern for groundwater. Obviously, I'm sure there are some safeguards put in place for any type of contamination getting into the soil and water and stuff. But if that were part of the project eventually, there certainly would be that concern also.

Larry:

That's a good point, Rhonda, and that's what this meeting is about, really, is to give us the points that we should go back and discuss about how to improve this. And it may very well be that we'll talk ... I can tell you, we will talk about what are the national ground water monitoring contributions, in terms of sharing that burden of the town. Maybe that could be triggered by something like a down the road battery storage modification of the project. We'll just have to fly those tests balloons and see how the parties respond.

Rhonda Coral:

Yeah, I may have misunderstood, but I thought that the developer would be responsible for the first five years, but the town would ... If the monitoring wells do not exist in the proper places, that the town would be responsible for the installation, for paying for the installation. Am I understanding that correctly?

Larry:

Yes. Yeah. The discussion early on in this project was ... This was a point that was brought up by one of the interested groups in the area, that this is something that we should request of the developer. And what we did was we looked at the locations of the existing groundwater monitoring wells that the town had installed. And it's been some time since that conversation happened. So I apologize for not being able to be more specific, but the consensus of the small group that was meeting at that time was we had the property fairly well ... I think there were three wells that were in the general direction of the down water gradient that we thought were sufficient to show problems, should they start to migrate off the site. Which is why those locations were chosen by the consultants in the first place, in terms of gathering data, should that land at some point be [inaudible 00:21:29].

Rhonda Coral:

Thanks, Larry.

Larry:

But the answer to your question, Rhonda, is yes, that any additional wells, if necessary, would have to be installed at the towns cost.

Rhonda Coral:

Thank you.

Drew Gibbons:

Hey, Larry, would you mind, this is Drew again, if we just ... I wouldn't mind Emily, our VP at permitting environmental, you know, the topic of batteries has come up a couple of times here now, and I wouldn't mind it if Emily, if you had a few comments to make. Is there anything you can add to that discussion?

Emily:

Sure. Hi, this is Emily and good questions, Rhonda. And just to reiterate a couple of the things that Larry said. The groundwater monitoring wells and system that the town currently has in place, it's actually kind of perfect for us to come in and do groundwater monitoring for our project. And we would start that monitoring prior to construction and take it through year five of operations. And the way the wells are set up, we've got at least two monitoring wells are up gradient from the project and three that are down gradient. And then we've got a couple more that are cross gradient. So again, it couldn't be a better groundwater monitoring system that's already in place.

Emily:

And then as far as battery storage, you mentioned that and how would that be covered. I think Drew mentioned earlier that, right now, battery storage is not contemplated as part of the project. It may be something that's evaluated down the line, but battery storage would include lithium ion batteries, which

don't leak, and they do not present a risk to groundwater contamination. So it wouldn't really be necessary to have that be a trigger for additional groundwater monitoring down the line.

Emily:

We did, during the development agreement discussions it was pretty obvious that groundwater was a concern, a very significant concern to the community, and that's why we have a lot of discussion around this. And we did kind of come up with a groundwater monitoring plan that would start before construction, carry on during construction and through year five of operations. And the types of analytes that we would look at would depend on at what point we were monitoring. So during construction is going to be a little bit different than during operations. It's been mentioned during operations, the only real concern we might have would be. Herbicides and most of the herbicide application is going to be through year three of operations when that site vegetation is establishing. So that's kind of how we came to some of the decisions we made during the development agreement discussions.

Rhonda Coral:

Emily, this is Rhonda again, just a follow up question on that. Now, at one point I spoke with someone and I cannot remember if it was you or another of your team, but we had talked about the cleaning solvents used on the panels and stuff, and that something was supposed to be ... Yes, it was an approved product and stuff, but is there any issue that the cleaning solvent should be looked for in the groundwater assessment?

Emily:

Good question. And first and foremost, I would say no solvents will be used to clean the panels. And most often, panels are just clean by rainwater. And if rainwater doesn't do the trick, then we can just use pressurized water. If we do in fact, have to use some sort of cleaning product, it would be biodegradable and environmentally friendly.

Emily:

Clearly, no further questions or comments. I'm going to move forward. I acknowledge there are a few folks on the telephone line waiting to make a comment and ask a question. I acknowledge you are there. I have another question though, submitted online, I'd like to get to first. This was by Sue Savage who writes, "In the groundwater monitoring plan, number six on page four, what contaminants will be monitored by our wells?"

Larry:

This is Larry. And we ended up covering that one. I learned my lesson, I shouldn't read ahead and cover the answers when we get to something related. But that'll be determined in the plan that will be yet to be developed. But as I said and as Emily said, what we'll be looking at is what are the activities, what hits the ground as a result of those activities, or what is disturbed in the ground as a result of those activities and what then reasonably make sense to look for in those wells.

Larry:

I also wanted to add, the previous question was how does this developer agreement protect our water? And we got kind of tied up in the groundwater monitoring plan, but I also wanted to point out that the

developer agreement recognizes and holds the developer to submitting an approved and adhering to approved storm water management plan that would have to be executed through the state.

Speaker 1:

Thank you, Larry. Moving onto the caller. We've got Peter Urban joining us on the line. Peter, go ahead with your comment, please.

Peter Urban:

Yes. I'm just curious, again per my comment, as to what happens around this area here? I mean, we're far better off with this solar plant than say a farming facility. I live off in Saratoga on Townline Road, but what [inaudible 01:02:01] there, when the stuff blows up out here?

Larry:

This is Larry. I would interpret that as a comment, more than a question. I didn't hear the last part. I didn't know if there was a question at the end. Has anyone else heard that and could repeat it?

Speaker 1:

Sorry. It faded out on mine as well. So I did not hear if it was a question, it was identified in my system as a comment. So the comment-

Larry:

What I ...

Speaker 1:

Go ahead, sir.

Larry:

What I did hear at the end is what happens if ... I got the impression it was, if things go wrong. There are a lot of things that apply in a situation like this from a legal perspective, a lot of requirements that a developer has to adhere to that you wouldn't see reflected in this developer agreement, other than just generally. For instance, in Wisconsin and at the federal level, we have spills laws that require disclosure and immediate response if something happens that's sort of an acute event, some sort of a spill or release of something on the ground that doesn't ... or in the air, that isn't an expected normal part of operating. And you won't see that in the developer agreement, other than a general reference to adherence to state and federal law.

Larry:

What we try to do in these situations is anticipate what's reasonably likely, or even unlikely but possible to occur, and make sure that there's restrictions in place or triggers that would result in a response that would effectively protect the community. And that's what, I guess, we're open to hearing about tonight is whether or not there's any of those that have been missed. We've done what we can. I think we've identified the things that ... I've identified the things that we could think of that and addressed them to the extent that they're not already addressed in substantive state or federal law. So we're interested in more comments from people about what we might have missed or what we might need to strengthen.

Speaker 1:

All right. Our next caller is Bill Clendening. Bill, welcome to the call. Go ahead with your question, sir.

Bill:

Yes. I would like to know, are there two DAs, one for the County and one for the town, or are they jointly?

Larry:

There are ... This is Larry, there are two processes. The County is engaged in one and we're engaged in another. It's yet to be seen as to whether or not those will be combined. And on other projects we've worked on around the state, they have been combined. It really depends on whose roads are being used and just what the will or the interest of the different governing bodies is. Where I think [inaudible 00:31:28], as I understand it, in comparison to where the County is in their process. But I think you'll see a lot of the same requirements and provisions. We'll have to work together to make sure we're not doubling up on some of the financial assurance guarantees and things like that. For instance, decommissioning. There isn't any reason for the town and the County to double up on a decommissioning bond.

Larry:

So we'll probably end up doing something in coordination with the County on that, or they may join this developer agreement, but right now we're leading the way. And in other words, I think we're ahead of the County. As I understand it, there's folks kind of paying attention and watching what we're doing with this and that they intend to adjust to that as necessary.

Speaker 1:

Our next caller, we have Dia Bayer on the line. Welcome to the call. Go ahead with your question, please.

Speaker 1:

Hello, is this Dia? I'm not hearing anyone? We'll go back to an online question submitted by Gail Kretschmer, will this meeting have an expiration or time limit?

Larry:

This is Larry. My understanding is we've got as much time as we need, I suppose, within limits. I would anticipate that we'll get to, based on the number of people and the questions coming in, we certainly expect to get to everybody's question. If for some reason we don't or someone's uncomfortable posing a question in this forum or upon reflection after the meeting has another question or comment, we would ask that they please provide those to the town. You can do that in a number of different ways. There's a general info email address for the town that you can find on the town's website. Town's website has a specific dedicated page for this project on the top list, of tabs. There's a yellow tab that says solar project. If you click on that, there's a link you can click on to submit questions or comments. You can use that. If you're not inclined to use email for that purpose, you can call the main office at the town and connect in that way also, but we anticipate covering everybody's questions tonight, but if we don't, please do not hesitate to submit additional followup, I would ask that you do that as soon as

possible. Obviously the earlier that you can submit those comments, if they come after tonight will be the more likely that we'll have time to fully vet them and get some answers out.

Speaker 2:

And again, as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question or you have a comment you would like to make live on this call and you're listening through your telephone, simply press star three on your telephone keypad to enter the question or comment queue. Again, please press star three to enter the question or comment queue. If you are listening to the live audio via the website, you can enter your name and question beneath the streaming player. So, we have another online question. This one was submitted by Christy Greening, it is my understanding and actual public hearing and comment event will be held at a later date hosted by the PSC, correct? This event tonight is just an informational meeting for the town to hear concerns and comments. Is that accurate?

Larry:

That is accurate. This is a public meeting to, particularly with respect to the towns side of this process, which is specifically related to this developer agreement. The PFC will be holding hearings on October 14th and the information about how to participate in those meetings is available on the PFC website or on the town website. And again, if you're not inclined or don't have good internet access, or you'd like more information about that, you can just call the town, but what Wednesday, October 14th, there are two meetings. Actually there's three meetings, one for parties to the proceeding, which wouldn't include, although anyone can listen in, it's not a meeting where you would ask your questions or pose your comments, but you can listen into that. And there are two meetings for the general public at 2:00 PM and at 6:00 PM. By the way, those will also be meetings that they'll be virtual, they won't be in person meetings because of COVID, and that you will also be able to join those meetings by telephone or live on the internet as available this evening.

Speaker 2:

All right, our next online question was submitted by Anthony Coca. The question is where is the access road going to be for the proposed substation areas and main tenants building shown on the map in the mailing from August 6th, 2020?

Larry:

That I will leave for Savion or Connie Solar to answer.

Drew Gibbons:

Yeah. And this is Drew again, and Harrison, standby to maybe provide more detail or just confirm what I'm saying, but my understanding is to access the proposed project substation area on that design, and operations and maintenance building will be accessing that off of Range Line Road through the center of the project. Is there anything more specific you can provide at this time, Harrison?

Harrison:

No, that is correct. It'll just be via onsite roads. Access point will be from Range Line Road.

Speaker 2:

All right. Moving on to the next submission from online. Teresa Bronc writes, adjacent properties will be forever and significantly defaced, and dramatically reduced in value. How will property owners be compensated?

Larry:

This is Larry. The developer agreement does not include any provisions that directly require any kind of private compensation. I think Savion or Wood County Solar would... Drew, if you or your team can talk about what you've seen in other areas regarding the actual impacts on property values and neighboring properties, that would be helpful, but I can say that in this draft agreement, there isn't anything that would require any kind of direct payment.

Drew Gibbons:

Thank you, Larry. Yeah, this is obviously a question that's come up, but with this project, as far as impacts the neighboring homes, and this is certainly, and I've been doing this for about 10 years now, and it's the number one question when we're delicate developing a project is what will be the impact to the homes in the area. And so, that's why one of the things we really focused on is what can we do to help screen the project from view of those homes? And in this case, it's important to note that over 95% of the Crowns Project Boundary is surrounded by existing trees and the rest is by clear fields, and the development agreement, as we talked about earlier, requires us to keep a minimum buffer of those trees in place. So, I think as far as citing this project and keeping it out of view, this project does a uniquely good job of that, but at a high level, as far as property value, we're unaware of any research or studies that indicate utility scale Solar has a negative impact on property values.

Drew Gibbons:

Makes sense in some ways, because once operational, solar projects are quiet facilities with minimal traffic and no noise or emissions, which in some ways is less intrusive than in farming operations or timber operations as well, but it also, at the same time, make sense the neighbors would want to know if a solar project will affect their property values. The best way to answer that is to look at data from real estate sales and assessments. There's been numerous local and national studies that have been done by third parties and by County assessors to show the impact of solar projects and clean energy projects on property values. For example, try Stago County assessor in Minnesota studied the impact of the North Star project there, which is a 100 megawatt solar project and found no negative impact with most projects selling above appraisal. This is something we've shared that link to this article and the study they did previously. And there's also been a property valuation experts as well.

Drew Gibbons:

CohnReznick did a study with similar results, and we're happy to provide that link to that article, but again, I totally, I understand the question, but the answer is that we do everything we can to make sure that, folks, we minimize visual impacts, which in this case, again, we're uniquely able to do because of the trees existing, and I think I'll leave it there.

Speaker 2:

All right, continuing on with another online submission. Earlier in the call, one of our first online submissions came from Bob, and Bob wrote, he's concerned about speed limit approaching the landing

zone with equipment on Range Line, line of sight is on a slight Hill, is what he has added to that comment concern.

Drew Gibbons:

Well, Larry, if you don't mind me jumping in, I know we talked about speed limits earlier. So I mean, as far as line of sight and on a slight incline, I guess I would point to our CPCN application and Chris Patar with Stantec, I know you're on the line and I would just point to, we were required to provide visual simulations to the PSC with that application and we provided them along Range Line road, also South of the project on Hillcrest Avenue, and then there were some spots along the transmission line easement routes which we provided as well. So, I mean, I think if folks wanted to take a look at that and see what the visual simulations showed the project would look like based on our current design, I think that could be helpful.

Speaker 2:

So, just as another reminder, if you've joined this meeting by phone and you would like to get into the queue to comment or ask a question, you can press star three on your phone keypad. If you've joined this meeting through the website, you can submit your comments or questions below the streaming player on your screen. Another online question, this one submitted by Gail Kretschmer, number 11 of the draft DA, could we extend the notification of residents out to at least one half mile from site instead of only a quarter mile?

Larry:

And to be clear, are we talking about notifications for activities that will occur later than anticipated noise generating activities? Is that what I'm understanding?

Speaker 2:

Unfortunately, I read all of the information that was provided in the question from Gail.

Larry:

No, I'm looking to, and maybe drew or someone. I see. The question actually reference... Go ahead.

Drew Gibbons:

No, I'll help there. So, number 11 is what was referenced here in the development agreement and that's construction operations, and it talks about limiting construction activities to the hours between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM. And then it says, "while not anticipated, in the event construction needs to occur outside of those 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM hours. It says residents within a quarter mile will be notified." And the question here is can that be increased to a half mile? And I think that's a fair ask, and Larry, that's something we're certainly, if you want to take a note to follow up on, we're certainly willing to talk about that.

Larry:

Great. Good suggestion.

Speaker 2:

All right. Another online comment. This one comes from Bruce Dimmick. We live in Saratoga and have a home solar system. It has met all expectations and we love not paying electrical bills about six months of the year.

Larry:

Sounds like a great comment.

Speaker 2:

So, and now moving on to another online question submitted by Gail Kretschmer. Why in the draft DA is it stated that our town will pick up the cost of the monitoring wells? Not acceptable. Also, what will the groundwater test look for? Nitrates won't be our issue anymore, but glycosate will be, as well as heavy metals and chemicals.

Larry:

Yeah. Great comment from Gail. The, the reason why it was stated in the developer agreement that the town will pay the cost of monitoring wells is because in an early analysis, the review of the, of the existing wells, there was agreement amongst those involved in the groundwater testing project currently underway in the town that there were wells existing that are located strategically to be good canaries in the coal mine, if you will, about groundwater impacts from the site, which is not surprising. I think there were some, that the consultants the town hired to, to develop this monitoring system could have heard Emily from Wood County Solar comments about how these Wells are really ideally situated to understand the groundwater impacts in the area, I think they would have been pleased to hear that because remember these groundwater monitoring wells were put in place with the idea that the analysis of those wells really needed to show the town a good, clear picture of what was going on, on this particular site, what will be tested? What those wells will be used to evaluate?

Larry:

We've covered that a couple of times that the answer is there's going to be a plan put into place, again, what will specifically be listed will depend on what activities are occurring at what time. glycosate might be a perfect example of something we'll talk about adding onto that list. That's yet to be determined, in more detail about the phases of the project and what chemicals will really direct those discussions now. I can say we're just not going to have them test for everything because it's just cost prohibitive. There has to be a link to a realistic potential for that type of a contaminant to become present in the groundwater. And so, there has to be an identified possible source, whether that's natural or something caused by the developer, and there has to be at least a slight risk of that ending up in the ground water. And those are the things that we'll discuss putting on that list.

Speaker 2:

All right. Let's move to [crosstalk 01:23:05]. Go ahead, ma'am, I'm sorry.

Emily:

I'm sorry, Dirk. This is Emily with Savion again, and Gail, thanks again for your question. I will say that the typical laboratory analysis that we would do during operations would be for herbicide related contaminants, and those are usually analyzed under EPA methods, 547 or 60 pounds, 74, 70 or 74, 71.

And those are basically your standard laboratory analyses for herbicides or heavy metals. So, if there was a concern, it would be identified during the groundwater monitoring process. And again, I will say that this is a very conservative and very thorough and comprehensive groundwater monitoring plan we're talking about. Not something that you typically see on the solar facility or related to a solar facility where you don't have hazardous material storage or contaminants routinely used onsite. So, we will address concerns, but yeah, to the appropriate laboratory methods. Thank you.

Speaker 2:

Moving onto a telephone Question. We're joined now by Arlene Walker. Arlene, welcome to the call. Go ahead with your comment, please.

Arlene:

Okay. The dimension about devaluation of the value of the property, the property values, there was a study done, and I think it was the University of Illinois, but I couldn't download the whole research, and they did claim that it did affect the values of the homes, and the point is too, is if you can't sell your house, it's not even going to be included in that devaluation research because you just can't sell the house. The other thing I would like to make a comment is I did read somewhere that the devaluation can be up to 30%, but the other comment I have is you have a 50 foot buffer of the trees, but that's not going to work because the trees have no lower limbs. These are pine trees and they don't have the old, further up and down the trunk of the tree as the tree grows, it's more and more visible and the other comment about the value of the homes is about the glare and the positioning of these panels. At some point, we're in Wisconsin and the sun gets lower and lower in the sky as winter approaches.

Arlene:

And you have people all up and down Hillcrest and on Blue Ridge or whatever there, and even for us, it would be coming from the West. You would see the solar farm, but you would also, the radiation from this intruding into their homes. I just would like you to comment on that.

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I think that definitely for the developer here. So, this is Drew. I'll take that question. I'd be happy to take a look at that study on property value. You can share with us that either our Facebook page or Wood County, or woodcountysolarproject.com, our website. You can provide that. I'd love to take a look. It's hard to evaluate it on the fly here. I will, before we get to Glare, which is where we'll end, and Emily, I'll pass that off to you. Cause I know we did do a Glare study here and interested in your comments on what the results were, but as far as the trees and the brands of pine trees, et cetera. So, I would say, we keep saying 50 feet, because that's the minimum required by the development agreement, but if you look at the map, that's on the town website or on the project website there are no homes within 300 feet of the project tenths line, and no homes, it would only have 50 feet of trees between the project and the fence line. In most cases, we're talking about 200 plus a foot of depth.

Drew Gibbons:

We have done visual simulations in that range of the 200 foot to 300 foot plus depths, and during the winter, when there were deciduous trees did not have leaves and I'd be happy to share those visual sims with you again, if you follow up with us on our website and they show that, at that depth, when

we're talking about 200 feet, plus there's nothing visible, but regarding glare, Emily, as promised, I'll let you address that a bit.

Emily:

Sure. We did do a grant analysis for the project, and one of the things that we looked at in that analysis was what the predicted glare would be two cars on adjacent roadways, and it looked at the predicted glare throughout the course of the day, if the panels rotate with the sun, but it looked at glare for cars, just regular standard cars at about a five foot level, and then also the nine foot level that would cover more of your SUV or your larger vehicles, and the analysis predicted that there would be no glare to cars passing by on adjacent road. Right. And another thing I will note about the glare analysis is that it is a really conservative assessment and it doesn't take into account existing vegetation or any other obstructions that would block glare from a panel. And again, I think you noted all the studies that we have done for this project are available on our website, which you can go to our website, or you can go to the town website and they have linked our website with all the studies.

Speaker 2:

Moving on to another online question. This one submitted by Gail Kretschmer. It's actually a comment. We definitely need to be more specific in protecting our groundwater. Please go back to the drawing table on page four, number six. Now a question also submitted online by Gail Kretschmer. You consider glyphosate environmentally friendly, like you mentioning using cleaning solvents that would be friendly. Please be careful. Not all EPA approved substances are truly environmental friendly.

Chris:

Drew, this is Chris. Do you mind if I respond to this?

Drew Gibbons:

Sure, sure. Chris, introduce yourself. Well, I think you already introduced yourself. Go ahead.

Chris:

This is Chris Pecar. I'm with Stantec and we've been assisting Savion with the environmental studies and the site engineering for this project. And I just want to go back and specific to herbicides, again, first and foremost, the intent is to use the herbicides to rid the site of invasive and incompatible species while creating the sustainable and resilient plant community. And the goal is to create that plant community with benefits, pollinators, other wildlife and is aesthetically pleasing and reduces the longterm application of herbicides. And the project will only contract with licensed commercial applicators for any application of herbicide use on site, and applicator spray just enough to wet the plant and minimize the herbicide solution from coming into contact with the ground. So, we can't think about like an ag operation where they're repeatedly spraying a field and there is a bare ground, because we are going to have a lot of vegetation growing and we are really just targeting those invasions and noxious species.

Chris:

I think it's also really important to remember that the herbicide solutions are typically diluted. So, only two to 5% of the solution is herbicide with the rest of it being water, and we know that this is a really big concern to folks with a history with the site and the sandy soil. So, we did a little analysis and

determined that this will translate into less than 100 ounces of herbicide per acre during the application, during the establishment period, when we do expect there to be more invasive species on site, but then as they respond to that control in later years, three, four, five, we're looking at less than 40 ounces of herbicide per acre during that period. I also want to point out a couple of things that the most commonly used herbicides in these restoration type activities are glyphosate and 24D, which are in fact commercially available and probably in a lot of garages and all the hardware stores in the County, in all the counties in Wisconsin.

Chris:

And these have a really short soil half-life of I think glyphosate is 3.6 days. Half-life 2 full days, 2.9 days, and they've also been rated to have low potential to reach shallow groundwater. So, there were a couple of other herbicides initially considered in the veg management plan. One specifically TriClare would really be limited for use of wooded plants. It's used with a backpack sprayer. And we can continue to work to identify alternative herbicides and formulations to minimize that as much as we can. One key point, and this is something that did not make it into the developer's agreement, but it was a part of the written testimony, or the data request and response process between public service commission and Wood County Solar is that, I think somebody had mentioned it before the project is constructed, there will be a spill prevention control containment countermeasure plan created for the site, and ultimately, we've determined that the two greatest risks to groundwater during the life of the project are related specifically to spills.

Chris:

And one it's diesel spills during construction of the heavy equipment operations, and then second would be during the herbicide mixing. And I'm sure you've all seen. You can have a larger tank and you pour in a gallon of the herbicide and dilute it. So, what County solar has already stated that all mixing will occur on a temporary or permanent containment pads to minimize that risk. So, hopefully that helps eliminate some of these, really the volume of herbicide that will be used, which is significantly less than it can appear when you think about this entire site being boom sprayed. It's, again, it's not like that, and some of the other things that we've done to minimize the risk.

Drew Gibbons:

Thanks, Chris.

Speaker 2:

So, moving forward as a reminder, if you have a question or a comment that you would like to make during this conversation, and you're listening to this conversation on your telephone, please press star three on your telephone keypad to enter the question and comment queue. If you're listening to this conversation through the website, you can submit your comments or questions below the streaming player on your screen. So, our next online question submitted by Bob, has the DA addressed the hours of heavy equipment operation during the construction period?

Larry:

Yes, it has. I have to pull up that provision. Basically what it says is that generally those hours of construction will not occur outside of the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. And when, we had just mentioned this before, when construction will occur outside of that time, people within a specified

distance, currently it says a quarter mile, it sounds like maybe we'll move that up to a half mile, will be directly notified within that distance of where those activities are actually occurring.

Speaker 2:

Thank you very much. Moving on to another online question submitted by Sue Savage. Is this meeting being recorded for us to listen to again later?

Larry:

I know that we are going to receive... Go ahead, Drew.

Drew Gibbons:

No, I can just say, because we did help facilitate this third party that's been running this. My understanding is that there will be both a transcript and a, a recording, and we can share that with the town. So, it's available on the town website. We'll just need to follow up afterwards.

Speaker 2:

Thank you. Moving onto the next online question. Theresa Bronc asks, how will visual impact be minimized with the new and obtrusive transmission lines?

Larry:

Drew it sounds like-

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I'll-

Larry:

That's geared to you.

Drew Gibbons:

Yeah, absolutely. I guess I'll lead off by saying again, the seed to state permit application, the CPCs did include some visual simulations along the transmission route alternative. If you're looking at the map or if any of you had the meeting via chance to look at the map on the town's website that zooms in on the two transmission line routes, you'll note that there are two and they separate. The state, the PFC does require that the project proposed two routes and the public service commission gets to choose, but we feel that is we have shared with the PFC that the response we've gotten from the community so far is that the route that would likely be preferred is the route that heads to the North and then to the East, and I think the public prefers it for the same reason the PFC is likely to prefer it because it runs adjacent to existing transmission lines or public road right of ways for over 85% of its length.

Drew Gibbons:

I guess what I would say is for the homes, and again, you can see on that map, the residences within 300 feet of those lines, or three to 500 feet, the handful there, I guess actually I'm counting it's about seven or so, maybe a little under 10, all those homes are close to an existing high voltage line already, and our

line would be on the opposite side. So, I guess what I would say is, yes, we are adding another transmission line, but it's on the far side of the existing transmission line near those residences

Speaker 2:

Moving on to the next online question submitted by Teresa Bronc. Wisconsin Rapids Airport has undergone tremendous investment to accommodate increased air traffic for those visiting Sand Valley, as well as longterm and new private pilot enthusiast. How will glare be controlled for air traffic?

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I'll-

Larry:

I'll say this is-

Drew Gibbons:

Yep. I was going to do exactly that. I was just going to say, "Larry, we'll take that one." And then I will immediately direct that back to Emily to talk about glare again.

Emily:

Hi. Thanks for the question, Teresa. So, I will say a couple of things. As part of the glare analysis that we did earlier that looked at adjacent roadways, we also look at impacts to approaching air traffic to nearby airports. In fact, I think we looked at all airports within 10 miles of the project, including the Alexander Field Southward County airport in Wisconsin Rapids and the assessment did determine there'd be no predicted glare or no predicted unacceptable glare to pilots approaching that airport. A couple other points that I will make is that our solar panels are made to absorb the sun's light and not reflect it. So, just by nature, they do not reflect the sunlight. And so, they typically don't cause unacceptable level of glare for pilots approaching airports, and one really good example of that is that you see solar panels, PV Solar Panels cited on airports across the country. You're starting to see it more and more now. Indianapolis is a great example of that. I think they've got a 10 to 15 megawatt facility sited on the airport grounds, but certainly you see it on military basis and other airports across the country.

Emily:

So I hope that answers your question, but I will also say that if you have additional questions about glare and potential impacts to adjacent roadways or nearby airports, you can find our glare analysis on our website, or also linked on the town's website.

Speaker 2:

Moving on to the next online question. This one was submitted by Sue Savage. What is the current state of the land transaction? Has it been bought from [inaudible 00:33:46]?

Drew Gibbons:

So, Larry, I think that one's clearly for us. I can address that. So, I think we've said this publicly at our town hall meeting initially in September of 2019, and then again in January, when we had another community meeting and we try to be consistent with this. The land, we have an option to purchase that

land with the project to go forward. So, that option is still existing, and assuming the project were to go forward, we would execute on that option.

Dirk:

Thank you very much. We have another online question submitted by Bob, has the DA addressed the amount of floodlighting used during construction, and the longterm use along fence lines or anywhere causing light pollution?

Larry:

Yes, it does. It does so in a relatively general sense, but that general sense does create what we think of as a pretty limiting strong language in favor of minimizing light pollution, and that is, that it requires that all light on the site and that supplies during the operations of a site and during construction, are to be limited to minimal lighting that's needed for security on the site and for safety. And so, I've written a number of developer agreements for various types of activities, and it's hard to get more specific than that. So, what we typically do is just hold the developer to [inaudible 01:43:35] minimal requirement, and if we feel as if they're allowing more light pollution than would be necessary for safety and security, then this gives you an opportunity to enforce against that. So, this is about as far as you can go with the lighting with any kind of accuracy, just requiring it to be minimal.

Dirk:

Continuing on with another online question. This one submitted by Sue Savage. I am concerned about clear cutting over 1800 acres of forest land. It's well known trees, clean the groundwater as it goes through the area. Wysocki dumps manure just over the Portage County line and it comes our way to the Wisconsin River. So, what happens to our water? We need continued monitoring with our trees to clean the water.

Larry:

This is Larry. [crosstalk 01:44:49] that was a comment, and part of it was related to maintaining tree coverage on the site. I mean, I think it would be likely if we polled everyone who lives in the area or who even just routinely passes the area that people would probably prefer that the trees stay by a pretty broad majority. That's not something that town can control. Certainly these trees could be harvested for some more cultural products to put the land to another use, although we can control that to some extent with zoning, but requiring someone to keep trees on property is something that's outside the scope of authority of the town. So, it's really a question of, so the landowner has a number of options. How does this fit into the range of options in terms of how positive it's received, and what the impacts are locally?

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, if I could just tag onto that just to clarify some facts there. I mean, it was mentioned 1800 acres of clearing trees. The numbers are, we have a little over 1600 acres under control. Our project footprint will be closer to 1200 acres, and we are looking to clear less than 900 acres of trees, and as you pointed out, I think indirectly, the timber onsite is planted pine. It's planted and grown with the intention harvesting it for its monetary value. So, these trees were planted to be cut down, and I think we're leaving a significant amount in place with our buffers around the project boundaries.

Chris:

This is Chris. I'd like to add just a couple other points. Also the Red Pine roots really aren't reaching to the depth of groundwater, and a lot of the native grasses and sedges are also quite deep rooted, which is one of the reasons they've been selected. So, they will continue to perform that water filtration that you're talking about, but we also did look at the groundwater flow and water on this site really flows from East to West, and some goes a little North towards Seven Mile Creek, and some goes a little South towards 10 Mile Creek. So, if there is any spreading in Portage County, I'm not sure that any of that ground water would actually be flowing through this site. It would rather be directing West or Southwest towards the Wisconsin River.

Emily:

Actually the way that the ground water flows with where they have been spreading in Portage County, just across the road from Saratoga, it definitely would flow through there.

Chris:

Well, I guess I'll just refer back to the maps that we had seen which show the water flowing South towards 10 Mile Creek and not flowing North of 10 Mile Creek, but that's another thing to investigate.

Dirk:

So, as I look at my console in front of me, which shows me if we have anyone on the phone or any additional online questions, and both are presently empty. If you have a comment or a question that you would like to make now is a perfect time. If you are listening to this conversation on your telephone, please press star three on your telephone keypad to enter the question and comment queue. Again, star three on your telephone keypad, or if you are listening through the website, immediately below the streaming player, you'll see a place to put your name and your question. That's how you submit your comment or question below the streaming player on your screen.

Larry:

Maybe while we're waiting for questions to come in, we could ask if any of the town board members have any comments or questions.

Rhonda:

I do. This is Rhonda Corral. I think it would be a really great opportunity. Given the closing of the Varso Mill and Wisconsin Rapids, it would be absolutely great if the jobs being created with the construction of this project once approved would be posted locally. And then, I had a text come in asking if there are any contractors being invited to bid this project yet? And if so, are any of the contractors union?

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I'll address that? And I was trying to page through the development agreement here. I think there is some kind of requirements for job fairs or something similar. What I will say, the high level, it affirms that this project has not been bid out to the large EPC firm. So, there's been no a tier one EPC that would lead the construction selected. Typically once that firm is selected, they do subcontract out locally and they certainly look for a local labor force just practically. They don't want to have folks travel in and stay in hotels. So, if there is, to an extent, there's a construction workforce locally, they will absolutely

use it. And as far as job fairs and that kind of thing, that's something we will certainly support and we've talked to technical schools and colleges in the area already about that kind of thing. In addition, as far as existing local contractors throughout the development, we've had a bunch of folks reach out, whether it's on the electrical side or tree clearing or landscaping, and we've been keeping a database of those folks and we're going to share it with EPC when they're selected.

Drew Gibbons:

So, absolutely, EPCs tend to try and subcontract out locally and that'll be the case here as well.

Rhonda:

Thank you. Very helpful. I do have one other question. This is Rhonda Corral. I've read a little bit and very little but about a heat Island that can be created from solar rays, especially of the size. Are we to anticipate a slight temperature increase adjacent to the solar ray, and given the fact that the tornado went through that area and took down quite a few trees and that's a natural weather area there, is there a concern for your solar panels?

Drew Gibbons:

Great, thank you for the question, Rhonda, and Larry, I'll address that. First I'll address the question about the heat Island effect and then I'll talk about tornadoes and any concerns there. On the heat Island effect, so most of the studies associated with that, having conducted an ambient Southwest environments, and none of them substantiate the claim that PD solar increases ambient air temperatures, which makes sense. Solar panels absorb sunlight and convert it into electricity. PV modules can reach higher operating temperatures, up to 120 degrees, but they are thin and lightweight and they therefore do not store a large amount of heat. So, basically what happens is sunlight hits the solar panel, that energy is partially converted to electricity and partially converted to heat in the panels. However, the PV panels are off the ground, four plus feet off the ground and surrounded by air. So, the heat is dissipated very rapidly and doesn't build up and become stored like they do it with rooftops or pavements. I mean, the heat Island effect is really more for when you're paving over an entire surface, especially in urban environments.

Drew Gibbons:

One last note I'd make on that is in addition, when the facility shuts down each night, the system is able to cool down on a daily basis. Regarding tornadoes, I think the best way to address that is the project is required to have insurance that would cover any kind of forced majora or natural disaster, and that would require any cleanup and rebuilding needed for that kind of event.

Rhonda:

Thank you, Drew. That is definitely an area though where on one side, on the North side, it might be raining and on the South side, it is dry as a bone and that pattern goes all the way to the river. Just so you guys know that.

Drew Gibbons:

Great. Thank you, Rhonda.

Dirk:

Are there any additional comments or questions? I do have a few in the online as well as the live callers section on my control board. Hearing nothing further, we'll go back to a caller. I've got Bill lightnem joining us now. Welcome to the call, Bill. Go ahead with your question.

Bill:

Thank you. Just wanted to thank Drew, and Larry, and Emily, and I guess Chris, who I don't know for answering questions for the past two hours or so. We appreciate all your efforts. I had asked a question through your operator about heat Island, and I think while I was talking to her, I heard the end of a partial answer, but with regard to that heat Island, and then I want to ask another question. So, you haven't found anything with regard to heat, but associated with the heat Island concept would be an increase in rainfall amount, any anything there? And I think what I want to do, and you can answer that rainfall part of the question, but then I want to ask another question if I could. I actually waited on the phone for like 45 minutes. And so, I'm going to use this opportunity to ask two questions. If you look at page four of the draft agreement, the revenue guarantees, and I don't know if these numbers have been mentioned to the general public, but the town getting \$250,000 a year once the project is an for a year, I believe, and the County getting \$350,000 a year.

Bill:

It seems to many of us from the Protect Wood County group, and it probably seems to a lot of people that, that dollar amount over 30 years should have some sort of an inflation escalator to it. I think I did some rough math there and it amounts to both governmental bodies would end up obtaining \$18 million over 30 years, but with no possibility for an inflation escalator. So, I guess first, the second part is the heat Island effect question, and then the utility payments. And by the way, thank you.

Drew Gibbons:

Sure. Thanks for your question. I'll jump in here. Bill, thanks for your question and sorry that you had to wait so long there on the phone. I guess we've been kind of trying to go back and forth and doing the best we can, but appreciate your patience. Emily, I'm actually going to answer the question about the economic benefits first, and then I will toss it back to you or Chris to kind of ask the followup question about the heat Island effect, and I think what bill brought up was something about rainfall. So, I'll talk first about the utility aid payments. So, the question was for the content statute, and the statute number is 76.28, there are utility aid payments that come from the project to a local jurisdictions. In this case, based on the megawatt size of the project as Bill pointed out, there'd be 350,000 per year to the County, and 250,000 per year to the town. Certainly understand the argument that there could be inflation rate there and why that would make sense.

Drew Gibbons:

I guess I would say two things. One, hat's not something we, as the project, has control over. That's imposed by state law, but federally, I think there is a benefit to having a fixed amount of money. I mean, that's something local jurisdictions can draw liens against when you have a fixed amount of known income coming in. So, there's definitely value there in having certainty, but certainly understand the spirit behind the question. Emily, as far as heat Island and rainfall, were you tracking on? Do you have anything to add there?

Larry:

Before you get into that, on the question of those utility aid payments, that's something that periodically is changed by the state, and it's possible that those could change, but an inflation mechanism would be certainly more predictable, but it was either tie it to the payment that we're already receiving or forge on and do our own thing. And then at this point, we're talking about just following what we... This isn't supposed to change the amount the town will receive. It's supposed to guaranteed what we're supposed to receive that as of today occurs through the rest of the project in case that lot changes.

Drew Gibbons:

And Larry, I would like to add onto that before we toss it over to Emily that you mentioned the law change. It was only my understanding from our local tax counsel is that this law, or similar, has been on the books since the mid '80s, and it has changed very little since then, and I think it's only been changed once and it was to increase the amount slightly. So, while yes, it certainly could change, because if the law and laws can change, it's very unlikely to, but in that event, just like you pointed out, the revenue guarantee would make sure that the town is made whole. And without further ado, Emily, on the heat Island second part question.

Emily:

Sure.

Chris:

This is Chris. I can jump in and add a few things and Bill, let me know if this is addressing your question. One thing I do want to also add about the heat Island is that the row spacing between the panels is currently 27 feet. So, the density of the panels across the site they're fairly spaced out, which will allow for a lot of evapotranspiration to cool the site down. And in terms of what would be the effects of any increased rainfall? We did do a hydrology study early on, primarily to confirm the accuracy of the FEMA mapped 100 year floodway on Seven Mile and 10 Mile Creek and found that they are accurate and there's a 30 foot grade differential between basically the basic site elevation and the water level down on Seven Mile Creek. So, we've combine that with the excessively well drained soils that exist on site and I don't think this poses any additional flooding hazard at all.

Dirk:

Is there anything more to be added into that answer or is it okay to move on to another call or question?

Drew Gibbons:

I think we can move on.

Dirk:

Okay. Very good. Joining us now on the phone, Gail Buyer. Gail, welcome to the call. What is your question?

Gail:

Yes. I was just wondering when Savion's anticipating starting the project and when they have planning on finishing it.

Drew Gibbons:

So, I'll address that Gail. Thank you for your question. I think the current schedule is the earliest that any construction or even pre construction activities would start, would be mid to late 2021. So, mid to late next year, and as soon as that it would be online and operating is as late 2022. That could be pushed out, but that is the most aggressive timeline.

Dirk:

All right. As a reminder, if you have a question or a comment that you would like to make, press star three on your telephone key pad at any time to get into the question and comment queue, or if you've joined this meeting through our website, you can submit your comments or questions below the streaming player on your screen. Moving on to an online comment. Perry writes, tree farms are managed and replanted. Please do not confuse 900 acre clearcutting with tree farms and tree management. Moving to an online question from Gail Kretschmer now. Once this developer's agreement is final, how strong is it legally? If residents see concerns slash issues down the road after Savion sells it to another entity, who would they call?

Larry:

This is Larry. The agreement is designed to be legally sound and enforceable, and for the project to be solved from, by Wood County Solar to potentially Align Energy, or another entity, they would have to take on the obligations under this agreement, assuming it's entered into with Savion or Wood County solar. So, it is enforceable legally, and it also includes a number of provisions that allow direct enforcement by the town. So, if people see problems or violations or concerns associated with the compliance with this agreement down the road, they should definitely contact the town.

Dirk:

All right, next online question. This one's submitted by Bob. Will any other trees or shrubs be planted in the buffer to help with wind and dust in the future?

Larry:

This is Larry. The only thing the development agreement requires is that the 50 feet of trees from the project boundary inward not be removed, and that is a material number of those trees is lost for some reason that the developer work with the town to come up with a plan to replant those. So, it's about maintaining existing buffer. There's no requirement that any additional buffer be created in this Development Agreement. Although, as cited earlier, there is a provision that requires the developer to work with individual land owners who might have concerns about the view from their particular home. And so, there's the possibility that individual landowners will work out something where there would be additional planting, but to Development Agreement does not require it.

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I'll just add on top of that. Your point about the development agreement is obviously accurate. I'll just say, as far as our current plans, and Chris Pecars, just wanted to get your attention on this, as far as

what we submit it with our state permit application and the veg management plan, that does include, as Chris was pointing out that the rows of trackers are 27 feet apart. We will certainly be planning grasses between there to help with erosion. We don't want dusty panels for the same reason. The community doesn't want dust, but Chris, is there anything, don't feel pressure to add anything, but is there anything you'd like to add just based on what our dust management plan that could help with that topic?

Chris:

Well, I guess I would also just direct people to go back and look at those visual simulations and you'll see that, while it is obviously dominated by red pine, there is a shrub layer of Oak saplings and I think hazelnut in there, and other shrubs. So, there are existing shrubs and understory trees underneath those Red Pines that will help limit any dust blowing off the site. But once the site is re-vegetating, it will be a dense plant community of native, like I said, native and non native grasses and sedges and we chose those for a couple of different reasons. The non native grasses, typically in the DOT roadway mix among what we see, some bluegrass and some other things, and those are in there because they established very quickly. And so, that gets the site grading up and immediately limiting some of that erosion and any dust blowing on the site. And then the advantage of the native grasses and sedges is they tend to be very deep rooted.

Chris:

So, they are resilient, and more drought resistant. So we found that that combination of those species leads to longterm, resilient plant community with a dense understory of grasses and sedges in the paneled area.

Dirk:

Next, we have a comment submitted by Gail Kretschmer online. The comment is, next time, please consider having more space to write questions. A little bigger window would be nice. This is challenging. Thank you. Next, we have an online comment submitted by Bob. Thank you for having this streaming event tonight. Now a question submitted online by Gail Kretschmer. How does this developer's agreement differ from the obtaining a license as stated in our towns solar ordinance?

Larry:

So, this developer agreement would replace the license requirement. This town's solar ordinance says that the developer needs to obtain one of two options, either a license, or enter into a developer agreement. And so, the hope is always that an entity will enter into a developer agreement because we can cover, I think, more areas of interest and protection for town interests, which is the case here, but it's an either or under our ordinance as drafted.

Dirk:

Thank you for that clarification. Next, we've got an online question submitted by Bill Lightnem, please comments on the alternative rays now pictured on the Southeast margin of the proposed project along Blue Ridge Lane.

Drew Gibbons:

So, this has to do with, and Larry, we'll take that, this has to do with the POCCPCN application requirements, and Emily. I'll let you comment on that.

Emily:

Sure. The POC requires that we have a solar project site that can accommodate not only the solar project that we're proposing, but an alternative 25% of the project that we're proposing. So, that alternative 25% will not be built, but it's required that we set aside land for that by the POC.

Dirk:

As a reminder, if you have a question that you would like to ask, and you are listening to this conversation on the website, all you need to do is submit your comments or questions below the streaming player on your screen. If you would like to ask a question live on this call, and you are listening to this conversation on your telephone, simply press star three on your telephone keypad to enter our question and comment queue. Moving on to the online questions. Gail Kretschmer asks, has Savion worked alongside Representative Kruger on this project at all?

Drew Gibbons:

Larry, I'll take that one. I think that's obviously directed at us. The answer is no. The only interaction we've had with Representative Kruger is to send him emails notifying them that the project existed and letting them know where it is in the process, but we've received no responses and have not spoken directly to Representative Kruger about the project.

Dirk:

Thank you very much for that answer. And as I look in the telephone, as well as the online section of my screen, I do not have any questions queued up. So, again, this is a perfect time if you would like to ask a question or make a comment. If you're listening to this on your telephone, all you need to do is press star three. To enter our question and comment queue. Again, star three, to enter the question or comment queue to speak live on this call, or if you've been listening through the website, all you need to do is look beneath or below the streaming player on your screen. There's an area where you can type your name and your question to have your question asked.

Rhonda:

I have a question. Can you clarify the substation for line is just North of Mill Avenue. Is that correct? Has that been confirmed on [inaudible 00:32:18]?

Drew Gibbons:

Yes, Rhonda, thanks for that question. Yeah. The map that's available on the town's website shows exactly that. Yes, it's North of mill Avenue, right adjacent to that existing high voltage line North of Mill Avenue. Correct.

Rhonda:

Thank you.

Chris:

Just one point of clarification. The project substation is actually right down by the paneled area, just East of the existing line, and up there by Mill Ave would be technically a switching station, which that's the point of interconnect.

Drew Gibbons:

Fair enough, Chris. I definitely have my naming conventions wrong. So, yes, correct. The project substation versus the switching station where we're interconnecting the line, but Rhonda, for all intense purposes, they look very similar, the facilities.

Rhonda:

Thank you for that clarification. I appreciate it.

Dirk:

My console is still showing no additional or new questions or comments that have come in via telephone or the online system, but now is the perfect opportunity. If you have a comment or a question that you would like to have answered, press star three and your telephone keypad to enter the question and comment queue, or if you're listening online you can submit beneath the streaming player. So, I just noticed an online question come in from Gail Kretschmer. We, Protect Wood County are hosting an outdoor meeting for community to come and express concerns on Wednesday at 6:00 PM at town hall would Savion like to be there?

Speaker 3:

Larry I guess I'll step in here. My understanding Larry is that that was not an event that you wanted or were inviting Savion to attend. Is that correct?

Larry:

No, that's not a town meeting. I was invited to it and I am going to attend, but my understanding of it initially Gail, was that it was an effort to create a environment in which community members that wanted to attend could have a frank conversation with each other without necessarily having Savion present. But if that changes, I'm sure we can find that out tomorrow if that's changed and if that's changed, then an invitation can certainly be extended. But my impression was that it was an effort to try to make sure that each person who might have a different communication style or preference would have an opportunity to raise their concerns or their positive comments or ask questions maybe in more of a community-based discussion so.

Dirk:

So, another online question, this one was submitted by Marla Moleski, "If a tornado destroys any amount of panels, 10 years from now, leaching of chemicals would likely cause water contamination, how fast can this be cleaned up? And also, is there a possibility to have something in the DA to have Savion monitor the wells after a disaster?"

Larry:

[inaudible 02:18:58] I turn it over you or your team to talk about disaster planning and emergency, preparedness. And then we can talk about the rest.

Speaker 3:

Yeah, I think that makes sense, talk about kind of the premise of the question or statement here. Emily would you like to address it?

Emily:

Sure. I would say that if there was a disaster, like a tornado and some of the panels onsite were damaged, that we would clean up and replace those panels as quickly as possible. So, that would happen right after the fact. And then as far as concern over contaminants leaching into the groundwater as a result of panels being destroyed or broken, I guess in a tornado, these panels have been tested in laboratories by EPA methods through what's called the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure test. And they've determined not to be hazardous materials. And I don't want to go into too much detail, but what's interesting about this. It's called a TCLP test, is that how they administer the test or the analysis includes crushing panels into thousands of little pieces that are less than a 10th of a centimeter in diameter, and then soaking those pieces in a bath of acid and then testing the acid afterwards to see what chemicals have leached out of the panels.

Emily:

And the panels have been tested, PV panels have been tested by this method numerous times in various laboratories and determined not to be hazardous materials, which means there's no chemicals leaching out of these panels so that these panels can be actually disposed of in a class D landfill, which is the same landfill where your household garbage goes to. We don't dispose of panels from laboratories. We would recycle them, but just to demonstrate that they are not toxic and they're not hazardous materials, they have been tested in laboratories and they can be disposed of in a class D landfill. So, if there was a tornado, the first thing we would do is replace any damaged panels and there would be no concern of contaminants leaching into groundwater as a result of damaged panels.

Dirk:

Next, we have an online comment submitted by Gail Kretschmer, "Sounds great regarding our meeting on Wednesday. Thank you for tonight." Moving on. We've got Bill [inaudible 02:21:29] joining us again on the line. Bill, welcome back to the call. What is your comment, sir?

Bill:

Thanks. Yeah, I guess it would qualify as a comment, our Protect Wood County group sat down Sunday afternoon and really went through the developer's agreement with a fine tooth comb looking for things that we thought could be improved upon by both legal teams. And so, one of the things we found is some areas of vague language, and that would be something you would want to do. So, on page four, now it actually starts on page three under Decommissioning Plan, a comment in item B on the top of page four saying, "Restoration of the property to a reasonably similar condition." I mean, that just struck us as really vague. Maybe some rewording there might be a good idea.

Larry:

No, I can say... Oh go ahead. Why don't we keep Bill on the line if that's okay. We can go question by question here. Is that all right with you Dirk?

Dirk:

Absolutely sir.

Larry:

Okay. So, Bill if we can keep you on the line, especially since there's not a lot of competition for the time here right now. So, this is Larry. We struggled with that language and had a number of different discussions about what that should say. And in particular the concern that Savion had is that as the landowner, the landowner's going to have the ultimate choice of what to use this land for after the end of the termination and decommissioning of this project. And I think that was a good point. Our big concern.... My instructions from the town board and the town citizens really were to make sure that this wouldn't be used for anything that could cause ag related groundwater harm in the future.

Larry:

And so, when you combine that generally vague language, the provision that comes after what you referenced there does say replanting. Basically what we don't want is just for it to be left a construction site or something. The big debate was whether or not it should be replanted with trees. But again, that's really a question for the future landowner. If this project weren't to occur, going back to the comment from the gentleman who said, tree farming is different than clear-cutting. Well, that's not true. Tree farming is clear-cutting at times, and whether or not those trees get replanted is up to that tree farmer. It's a landowner's decision. And one of the things that we've heard all along in this process is that the replanting of red pine as an economic use of your property is becoming less viable.

Larry:

And so, what we tried to do is respect that there's a landowner at the end of this, the property will probably be sold. Somebody will own that land, and we didn't want to be too restrictive. But at the same time really hit the key issue for the community, which was this isn't going to be a place where someone's going to spread manure, or house livestock that results in the accumulation of manure. So, in a different provision, as you know, in the developer agreement that's specified that that would be a covenant that would be executed by the developer and filed to remain in perpetuity on this property. So, that was a big give by the property owner and developer. And in exchange for that, I think we provided a little bit more flexibility about what the restoration plan would look like. It's a little bit of a give and take there.

Bill:

Yeah, and that's certainly a great explanation of that language. I was sitting here thinking, reasonably similar to the state it was found in or to state a year or to a pine plantation or something like that. But I get where you were going. Let me go on, I don't want to monopolize time here, although I guess there aren't that many people waiting anymore,

Larry:

Monopolize away, Bill. You're the one, you're the one

Bill:

On page five, number 11, construction operations, in that top line there, "Construction activities that include significant noise." I think when we looked at this on Sunday, we were thinking maybe a decibel level should be mentioned, or what is significant noise if you-

Larry:

Stop there because like I say, we'll come back to your next question. I think, I don't want to monopolize the way we're going to run this, but because you're reporting some questions that came from a group of citizens, I'm very happy to take these one by one. So Bill, one of the things that I've worked on in other areas of the state and including in Wood County and other towns is a lot of noise related limitations in developer agreements for sand mines. So, we're talking about the types of activities, where I'm representing a town and the town's concerned about a sand mine being developed in the community and what I ended up learning is that decibel levels are... It's very, very difficult both to enforce decibel level because you have to have the equipment to test, and you have to have somebody who knows how to use that equipment.

Larry:

And the technical standards that you use when you're imposing a decibel limit are very, very difficult. I, for instance, today dropped outside on my front desk, I dropped one of my wife's planters. It's an old metal pot that we've drilled holes in the bottom. It's empty right now, and when that hit the ground that exceeded any reasonable decibel limit that you would ever impose on anything you wanted to live next to. So, recognizing that, what people have been doing is talking about weighted averages, and there's these scientific calculations based on, where they've tried to create these... It's kind of like the heat index where someone says, "Well, it's 90, but it feels like 98." That's the sense that they're trying to get out of these scientific formulas with noise to say, "Well, how irritating is it really? "

Larry:

Because if your neighbor pounds in one nail to hang their wreath on the front door, in the wintertime on a calm day, that doesn't keep you awake at night, right? Is it an occasional noise? Is it continuous? So, it's very, very difficult to impose limits. And quite frankly from a legal perspective, when I'm representing a town, what I say is, it's better for us to say what subjectively from our standpoint, whether it's significant, and if it's not we'll give them a citation. I mean if they're not meeting the requirement of notifying people, we'll give them a citation rather than having to prove all of these limits were exceeded. In other words, in this case, possession is nine tenths of the law. We don't possess the information necessary to enforce if we impose a decibel limit or some weighted average of some kind. And so, instead we're just going to use our subjective analysis and enforce based on that. So, I think this is a stronger, it puts the town in a more empowered position than some of the other methods that we really would struggle to enforce.

Bill:

Okay. Then the last [crosstalk 02:29:38].

Emily:

Sorry, Bill, this is Emily with Savion, and Larry thanks for that explanation, I did just want to point out that the PSE, they have a standard of 50 decibels during the daytime and 45 at nighttime in terms of sound limits. And we did do a sound study for the project and we found that the sound levels to the

nearest resident would be between 22 and 28 decibels during daytime when the system was in operation. So, the project would fall well below those standards established by the PSE.

Bill:

Okay, and Emily that's construction operations. Now, is there a low hum that comes off, I mean, I've never lived next to an array, is there a low hum that comes off a completed array that's in operation for 30 years?

Emily:

I'll take that, sorry. Bill, you know what, it depends on how close the residence was to the inverter or the substation, which is basically your sound generating components of the solar facility. I will say that at Wood County, the nearest resident to an inverter is about 830 feet. And then the nearest resident to the substation's about 4,060 feet. So, those residents would not, I mean they wouldn't be able to distinguish the inverter or the substation from their residence.

Bill:

Okay. Actually, I'm really glad I asked that question. That was something that some people may think of at some point and now we have the answer on that. The only other ones regarding vague language that I had was number 17 on page six, the site maintenance, very short line, "Developer shall at all times, maintain the site in good condition and repair." Again, seems vague, in good condition, I suppose you'd say for a solar array, good condition to me sounded like, what's that mean?

Larry:

Well, Bill, you broke up a little bit, this is Larry. I'm thrilled to answer this question, because if you think about who gets to decide what good condition repair is in this context, I think you'll be more comfortable. And the reason is, is because it's the town that gets to initially at least make that decision, right? The town's the regulating body in this case. And so the town... Basically what we have here is a contract that allows for unilateral enforcement. And I want everybody to stop and think about that. A contract I have with my neighbor to sell me hay for my goats, doesn't result in me being able to enforce legally against my neighbor, write a citation or something like that if my neighbor fails in that contract. This is a contract in which by contract the developer is accepting the authority of the town to unilaterally impose, to enforce against violations.

Larry:

And that's a really big, big deal. So, in other words if a complaint is brought before the town, town investigates and determines the complaint is well-founded, and there's some junk piling up around a particular spot in the site, or if things are in disrepair and generally an eyesore, the town gets to decide if that standard is met. And that's why it's a good thing, actually, for the citizens of the town of Saratoga, that that is vague. The more specific you get, again, like the sound provisions, the more specific you get, the harder it is to meet those specifications and to enforce. This is subjective intentionally because it creates a broader degree of discussion for the town, which is a good thing.

Bill:

Yeah, thanks, Larry. I agree, if the town decides the standard, that's exactly what we want. So, thank you. And that-

Larry:

That's not to say that if the town is particularly arbitrary or unfair in the way it interprets the agreement, that a challenge to that couldn't be brought in the courts, but it takes some pretty big affirmative steps to do that, right. The first stage though is the town's subjective decision.

Bill:

Thanks a lot.

Dirk:

All right. As a reminder, if you would like to ask a question or you have a comment that you would like to make, and you're listening to this conversation on your telephone, very easy to get into our comment and question queue, simply press star three on your phone keypad, again, to speak live on this call, please press star three on your telephone keypad. If you are listening to this conversation on the website, you will find beneath the streaming player, a place for you to put your name and your question and submit it online. Presently, I do not see anyone in the queue either via the telephone or in the online questions. So, there's no waiting if you have a question or a comment that you would like to make now.

Rhonda Correll:

I do have one more question, this is Rhonda Correll. In the draft development, it would be under the decommissioning plan on page four. It would be A, "Removal of all above ground project components, including proper dismantling there of." It was my understanding that onsite, there would be a lot of underground... No, offsite it would be overhead transmission lines, but onsite there would be quite a bit underground. What about the dismantling of the below ground equipment, is that covered?

Larry:

So, this is Larry. It's not in this agreement, what would end up happening, what does end up happening in these kinds of developments, I don't mean solar, but where you have some significant underground components, is that really the land owner in this case, the developer or its successor is it has to make really a business decision about whether or not the impact to the property value and maybe the limitations on the type of, and the number of potential buyers of the property once the project's completed, will be harmed to the point where it's better for them to remove some of that underground infrastructure. So, it's really up to them from the town's perspective. My recommendation was if it doesn't affect groundwater infiltration, which there isn't enough underground infrastructure for that to happen, or at least it's not continuous enough for that to happen, if it doesn't affect the surface water runoff or the view, sort of the public view of the property on decommissioning. We feel as if that's a little bit outside of what the town should be weighing-in on that.

Larry:

That's something between the landowner and future landowners, which they would have to disclose to those land owners. It's not unlikely that some of that would be removed and certainly down to a

particular depth. I find it very unlikely that a decommissioning project wouldn't at least remove everything down to adapt that would allow some flexibility in terms of how that land is used, at least on the surface.

Rhonda Correll:

Thank you, Larry.

Dirk:

All right, we have an online question and comment submitted by Bob. I'm going to take the comment first. The comment is, "The landing zone will be an eyesore during construction, question is can privacy fencing be put up around the landing zone during construction?"

Speaker 3:

Larry, I'll start out with that one. And I have to admit Harrison, keep your ears open. I think we're talking about the lay-down area, but I think we've... It's not showing on this map I have in front of me. So, you and Chris probably know it better in your heads, I forget where it ended up, but I guess if you could just remind me where it's located, and then if there is existing screening, and then we can address whether there's something we can do during construction, because we hear the comment and understand the sentiment but I want to make sure I know the facts first. Sorry [inaudible 02:39:11] so, it's either to Chris or to Harrison, where do we locate the lay-down yard at this point, was it on the east or west side of Rangeline? I'm trying to imagine it right now.

Speaker 4:

Sure. I can take this. It's on the east side of Rangeline Road, and it's over 200 feet of trees between Rangeline Road and the fence at that location. And then there's an access road that wraps around the lay-down yard. So yeah, there's 200 plus feet of trees between Rangeline Road and the lay-down yard. So, you would really just see an access road going straight back about 200 feet and there'd be trees on either side of the access road as well. So, as you're driving down Rangeline Road, you would just see a quick shot down that access road. And then 200 feet of trees obscuring the view of the lay-down yard from Rangeline road.

Speaker 3:

Maybe you could also talk about the potential lay-down yard on the north side of Mill, by the connection point with the, I guess you'd call it the connection, the switching station. There's another one shown up there and maybe that might be what Bob was talking about. That one's a little closer to the road.

Larry:

Yeah, that's true. That one is just north of Mill Avenue. And I think that would, in reality, be used for a pretty short period of time, just during the construction of that segment of the transmission line route and potentially the switching station.

Dirk:

We have an online question that was submitted by Gail Kretschmer. Gail asks, "How deep will the wires be buried?"

Speaker 3:

Larry I'll address that. The minimum buried depth of the collection lines throughout the project is three feet.

Dirk:

Looking at my console we do not have any online questions or phone questions or comments at the moment, again, just to repeat and reiterate. If you have a question or a comment that you would like to make during this call, live on the call, and you're listening to this conversation on your telephone, you just simply need to press star three on your telephone keypad to enter the question and comment queue, or if you're listening through the website, immediately beneath the streaming player on your screen, you'll see a place where you can type your name and your question. Now's the time to ask questions or make comments. (silence) Both online and telephone question and comment queues are still empty, gentlemen.

Drew Gibbons:

And Larry, this is Drew, we'll leave it to you and the town board to make a decision if it doesn't look like any more questions are going on, we can have our moderator Dirk go through the closing comments, but happy to stay on the line to see if any more questions come through or if there's questions from the board itself.

Larry:

So, unless there's other questions for the board, I think we've, run right up against what we thought would be our sort of ending time. And I guess I'd pitch it to Terry to just wrap up here and then back to Dirk for closing comments and-

Dirk:

If I could just interject here real quickly before going to Terry, we just had a online question submitted by John Dixon. So, he asks, "If property owners are opposed to the project, how can the project be halted?"

Larry:

This is Larry, I don't think that's a question for the developer who obviously wouldn't want the project to be halted. Yes, there are... Any concerns of any town resident has, should share those concerns with the town board, with their county representative so that the elected officials can make a decision from as informed a position as they can. Outside of that if there are actions that individuals want to take with regard to this project, that's really outside the scope of this call and wouldn't be something we would [inaudible 02:45:09] on here in this town meeting.

Dirk:

Thank you. And that was the only additional question that was submitted. So, I believe we were handing it to Terry.

Speaker 4:

It actually looks like we might have lost Terry along the way here. I'm not seeing him on the list. So, if the moderator wants, if you want to go into your closing remarks, feel free.

Dirk:

Okay, very good. As mentioned, we are coming to the end of our live event this evening. We definitely want to thank you for taking the time to join us for this important Access Live Event with the town of Saratoga regarding the Wood County Solar Project Draft Developer Agreement. We appreciate the opportunity to hear directly from the public. If we were not able to get to your comment or question this evening, please contact the town. You may either call the town hall at (715) 325-5204, or you can send an email to saratogaclerk@wctc.net. Again, that email is saratogaclerk@wctc.net, or simply visit the town website, click on the solar project tab and send a message via the contact option. Thank you again for your participation in this call. We hope you stay healthy and safe and have a wonderful evening.