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RECEIVED
APR 12 2016
TOWN OF ESSEX
COMMUNITY DEV. OFFICE

Bridgette Remington
bridgette@lac-lca.com
802-279-7498

April 11, 2016

Judith C. Whitney, Clerk
Vermont Public Service Board
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602-2701

Re: SolarSense VT IX, LLC Application for a Group Net-Metering CPG

Dear Ms. Whitney:

Enclosed for filing with the Public Service Board please find an original and one copy of an Application and supporting exhibits on behalf of SolarSense VT IX, LLC for a certificate of public good to install a 496 kW photovoltaic group net-metered generation facility in the Town of Essex, Vermont. My notice of appearance is enclosed.

In addition to the above materials, and pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248b(d)(2)(B) effective July 1, 2015, I enclose a copy of a check in the amount of $1,984 ($4.00 x 496) made payable to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and sent directly to the Agency with its copy of this filing.

Please contact me should you have any questions about this filing. Thank you for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

Bridgette Remington

Enclosures
cc: Attached Service List

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STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

CPG #NMP-

Application of SolarSense VT IX, LLC for a	)
certificate of public good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§	)
219a, 248 and Board Rule 5.100, for a 496 kW group	)
net-metered photovoltaic electric generation facility	)
to be located in the Town of Essex, Vermont	)

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC GOOD
PURSUANT TO 30 V.S.A. §§ 219a & 248 AS IMPLEMENTED BY
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD RULES 5.106 and 5.110(C)

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Exhibit SSVT-IX-4 One-Line Drawing
Exhibit SSVT-IX-4a GMP Fast Track Analysis
Exhibit SSVT-IX-4b Revised 5.500 Interconnection Application and GMP Approval
Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 Natural Resource Assessment Report
Exhibit SSVT-IX-6 Aesthetics, Historic Resources, & Town/Regional Plan Assessment Report
Exhibit SSVT-IX-6a Town/Regional Plans and Scenic Document
Exhibit SSVT- IX-7 Vermont Division for Historic Preservation Letter

Affidavits
Affidavit of William King, Project Manager
Affidavit of Ian Jewkes, Project Engineer

Affidavit of Brian Browning, Electrical Engineer
Affidavit of Mark Kane, Aesthetics, Historic Resources, & Town/Regional Plan Assessment
Affidavit of Dori Barton, Natural Resource Assessment

APPLICATION

Applicant Name

The Applicant is SolarSense VT IX, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company with a business address of 1055 Westlakes Drive, Suite 140, Berwyn, PA 19312. SolarSense LLC is developing the Project on behalf of the Applicant.

Host Landowner

The Host Landowners are Robert D. and Alice M. Chapin of 10 A Weymouth Street Sanford, Maine.

Project Description

A 496 kW group net-metered solar project is proposed for approximately ±3.42 acres of a ±66.5-acre parcel of agricultural land, located north off of Colonel Page Road in the Town of Essex.

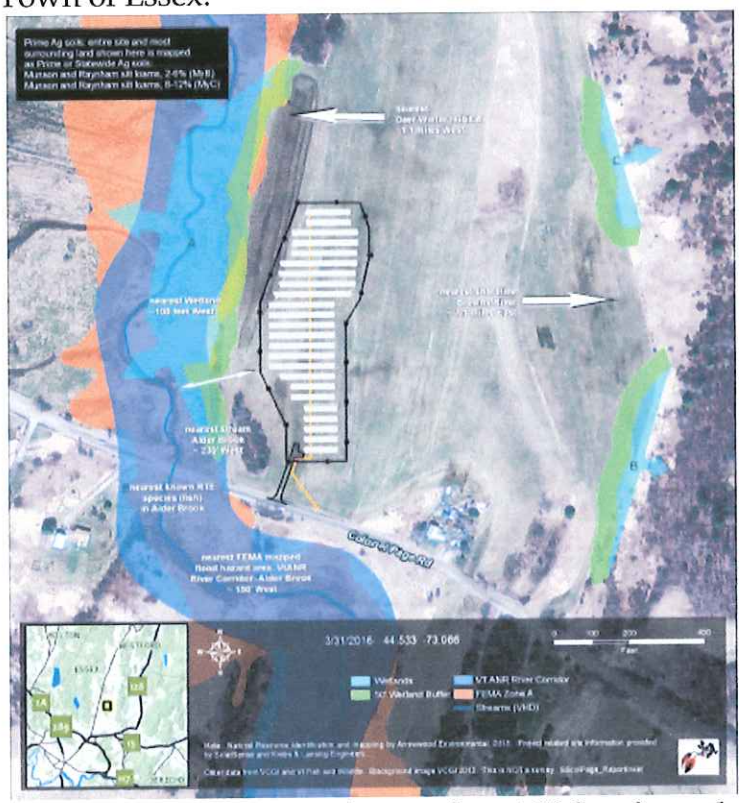

Figure 1: From Exhibit SSVT-IX-5: Aerial photo showing the solar array location.

The array will be located more than 100 feet from the centerline of Colonel Page Road and more than 300 feet from the closest residence, located to the southeast of the Project.

The Project does not involve any clearing and includes an aesthetic mitigation plan that will lessen the visibility of the Project from Colonel Page Road and nearby residences. Visibility of the Project from other locations will be largely filtered by existing mature vegetation, distance, and the topography of the site, which sits within a relatively flat, natural dip, of a saddle area.

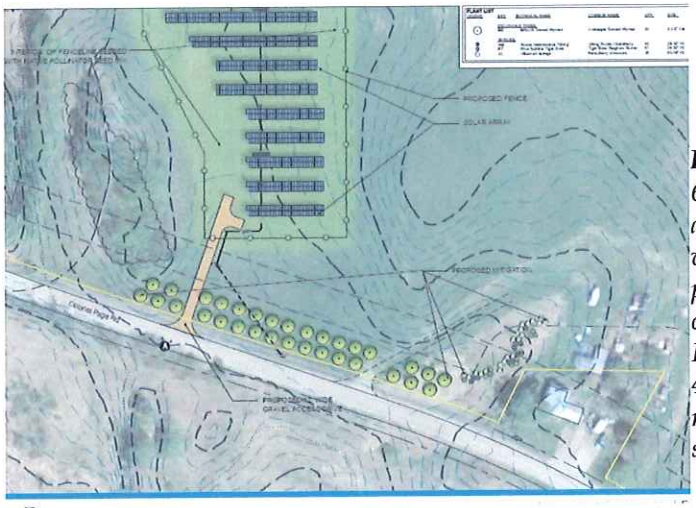

***Figure 2**: From Exhibit SSVT-IX-6: Aerial photo showing the solar array location with the proposed vegetative aesthetic mitigation plan, which includes planting 32 crabapple trees along Colonel Page Road frontage and planting 41 shrubs near the closest residence's property line, to the southeast of the array.*

The solar array will consist of solar panels attached to a fixed ground-mounted racking system driven into the ground without the use of foundations. The Project will also include string inverters that convert the DC power produced by the tracker to AC power useable on the local electric grid, mounted to the solar arrays. The arrays have a maximum installed height of approximately 10 feet above ground level. Combined output of the array will not exceed 496 kW (AC).

Wiring within the array will be installed in underground conduit. The Project will require the installation of a short overhead line extension from the panel board to the interconnection point with the existing Green Mountain Power Corporation (GMP) distribution system along Colonel Page Road. The line extension will include two new poles, one of which will accommodate the installation of three GMP-owned pole-mounted transformers. The facility will be enclosed with an at least 7-foot tall black agricultural-style perimeter security fence with a locked, gated entrance. The facility will be designed and constructed to the National Electric Code standards and will include all appropriate warning and hazard signage. Please see the Site Plan, One-Line Diagram, and Aesthetic Assessment, submitted with the Application as Exhibits SSVT-IX-1, SSVT-IX-4, and SSVT-IX-6, respectively.

The Project will require approximately 0.84 acre of earth disturbance, predominately associated with installing the gravel access road and the solar array racking posts,

utility poles, and fencing. Native soils are to remain in place. The total amount of new impervious surfaces after installation will be approximately .06 acre. The amount and limits of new impervious surfaces and clearing are identified on the Site Plan submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-1.

The Project will be accessed by a new 12-foot wide gravel access drive off of Colonel Page Road, which will be will be installed and maintained only to accommodate installation and the long-term, but infrequent access needs of the Project and the interconnecting utility. The Project will obtain and comply with any necessary transportation-related permits. Please see Exhibits SSVT-IX-1 and SSVT-IX-6.

Materials and equipment will be transported to the site using ordinary transportation services without the need for oversized or overweight trucks or permits. Installation staging and parking during construction will be on the project site.

The Project will not produce any undue noise while operating. Please see the sound projections offered with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-3. Noise from construction will be typical of small construction sites and will be short in duration.

The Project has been sited and designed to avoid adverse impacts to environmental resources including shorelines, streams and headwaters, Outstanding Resource Waters, floodways, wetlands, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, necessary wildlife habitat and rare, threatened or endangered species. The Project will be located in an area where soils have been designated as Prime or Statewide Agricultural soils, but such soils will only be minimally displaced and the Project will not result in the loss of any prime agricultural soils. Please see the Natural Resource Assessment offered with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5.

SSVT IX provided the 45-day letter notice of application to town, regional, and state regulatory agencies as well as adjoining landowners. Two adjoining landowners contacted the Project Manager to asked questions about the Project after receiving the 45-day notice letter. One asked about the Project's potential wildlife impacts and the other asked about the Project's aesthetic impact and expressed that he wished the offtaker was not an out-of-town entity (as detailed below, the offtaker is now a local business). In addition, SSVT IX has been in regular contact with the Town of Essex regarding the Project. SSVT IX provided the Town with information regarding the changes made to the Project since the 45-day letter notice, including the aesthetic vegetative mitigation plan. The Town of Essex Selectboard sent an email stating that they did not seek any further information and had no issue with the Project. The Planning Commission has indicated that it does not seek any further information, but is

still reviewing the Project and intends to submit any comments after the Application is filed. The Project did not receive any other comments following the 45-day notice.

The Project is supporting local renewable energy by employing Vermont consultants during all phases of development and installation. The solar array will also benefit the GMP distribution system by acting as a load reducer during peak periods in the summer months.

Meters Included in Group

The meters to be included in the group include a new production meter for the solar array and the following meters for the Twincraft Company. The first meter is located at 36 River Road, Essex, Vermont 05451 (Account #92872080802, Meter #E14673994) and the second is located at 2 Tigan St, Winooski, Vermont 05404 (Account #8287200003, Meter #E14792196).

Method for Credit Allocation

All net metering credits will be allocated to the Twincraft Company meters listed above using the stacking method, with credits going to the Essex facility first.

Method for Adding/Removing Meters

Meters will be added and removed from the group by agreement of the Applicant and the group member(s).

Designated Group Administrator

William King and Fritz Krussman, of SolarSense LLC, will be the Administrators for the group and responsible for all communications about the group with the utility, except billing, payment, and disconnection.

Dispute Resolution Process

Disputes within the group system will be resolved by the Administrators in their sole discretion and without the involvement of the utility, the Vermont Department of Public Service or the Vermont Public Service Board.

Disposition of RECS

The Applicant will retain the RECs (environmental attributes) of the group net metering system's output.

Application Review Criteria Per Rule 5.108(B) and 5.109

Orderly Development of the Region

- The Project does not conflict with any land conservation measures in the town or regional plans.
- The Project will not cause adverse impacts on the public roadways or on other types of municipal or state services or infrastructure. It generates almost no additional traffic and requires no new municipal services.
- The Project does not include clearing and does not impact areas of noted natural resource protection.
- The Project meets the state solar set back requirements because it is more than 100 feet from Colonel Page Road, and at least 50 feet all other property boundaries. See the Site Plan offered as Exhibit SSVT-IX-1.
- At the time the Project ceases to operate, the Applicant will restore the site by removing all aboveground equipment and all parts of the Project installed down to 24" below ground level. After off-site removal of all Project equipment, the entire area will be plowed and prepared for re-seeding or planting as may be prescribed pursuant to the Agency of Agriculture's Acceptable Agricultural Practices. Any stockpiled soils removed during construction of the Project will be reused at this point. This removal will allow the land to be utilized in the future for other purposes, if appropriate.
- Please refer to the discussion regarding conformance with the Town and Regional Plans, prepared by SE Group, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-6 at 7-14 and see the relevant plans at Exhibit SSVT-IX-6a.

Aesthetics

- The Project will not result in an undue adverse aesthetic impact, but will be at least partially visible from various public vantage points and residences.
- The Project will retain the existing mature vegetation along Colonel Page Road, to the southwest of the array, and will not require any clearing.
- The Project meets the state solar set back requirements because it is more than 100 feet from the centerline of Colonel Page Road, and at least 50 feet all other property boundaries.

- The Project will include an aesthetic vegetative mitigation plan to soften the visiblity of the Project. The aesthetic vegetative mitigation plan consists of the following:

    - Planting a series of 32 crabapple trees along the Colonel Page Road frontage (outside of the public right-of-way, but within the 100-foot setback distance), spaced approximately 15 feet apart and organized in a uniform grid broken only by the proposed access drive and an existing field accessway. The use of crabapples ensures that the trees will not get tall enough to limit long range views, but will filter and soften views by establishing a dense branching while fitting into the the existing working landscape and the historic agricultural uses of the area by establishing a structured pattern.

    - Planting a series of 41 shrubs (mixed deciduous and conifers) adjacent to the property line with the nearest residence, located southeast of the array, near Colonel Page Road. The small shrub plantings will establish a small hedgerow perpendicular to Colonel Page Road, creating a naturalized looking "filter" between the nearest residential property and the Project and softening views from the road coming from the east.

    - Sowing a meadow mix (wildflowers) within the Project fenceline to lessen the perception of a monoculture of underlying grasses, to provide forage for insects and bees, and to promote the continued agricultural value of the underlying land.

- An Aesthetic Assessment is provided as Exhibit SSVT-IX-6.

Historic Sites

- The Project will not have an undue adverse impact on historic sites. Please see the assessment of the Project's impact on above-ground historic sites prepared by the SE Group, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-6 at 13, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation letter offered with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-7.

- The Project will have no undue adverse impact on any historic sites listed in or eligible for inclusion in the State Register of Historic Places.

- The Project area has been identified as archaeologically sensitive and, as such, SSVT IX agrees to comply with the conditions proposed by VDHP in the VDHP letter offered with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-7.

System Stability and Reliability

- The Project will not have an adverse impact on system stability and reliability. Affidavit of Brian Browning at ¶ 5.

- A One-Line Drawing is submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-4 and GMP's Fast Track Analysis is submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-4a.

- GMP determined that neither a System Impact Study nor a Facilities Study is required. Exhibits SSVT-IX-4a at 11 and SSVT-IX-4b at 10.

- Section 4 of GMP's Fast Track Analysis included items of note and items that need to be addressed prior to the connection of the Project. SSVT IX will comply with Section 4. *See* SSVT-IX-4a.

- The Project submitted a revised 5.500 Interconnection Application on March 31, 2016, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-4b. The revised design changes one of the inverters and reduces the Project from having a 500 kW nameplate capacity to a 496 kW nameplate capacity. GMP confirmed via email on April 5, 2016, that approved the changes detailed in the revised 5.500 Interconnection Application and required no further study.

- The Project will comply with the National Electric Code and all energized equipment and wiring will be inaccessible, underground or within locked or sealed enclosures.

- The Applicant will enter into an Interconnection Agreement with Green Mountain Power (GMP) before the Project is commissioned and commences operation, and it will pay for all reasonable costs to interconnect the Project consistent with the requirements of the Interconnection Agreement and applicable rules.

Outstanding Resource Waters

- The Project is not located on or near any outstanding resource waters.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 8.

Headwaters

- The Project is located within a headwaters area as its watershed area is less than 20 square miles. The Project area is below 1,500 feet in elevation and the watershed for the site is not for public water supplies and does not provide significant recharge to aquifers. The Project will not result in a reduction of the quality of ground or surface waters in the area. Therefore, the Project will have no adverse impact on headwater areas.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 8.

Waste Disposal

- Waste generated during installation and operation of the Project will be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable Department of Environmental Conservation regulations and transported to appropriately licensed facilities.

- The Project will not involve the injection of waste materials or any harmful or toxic substances into ground water or wells.

Floodways

- The Project site is not located in or near a floodway or floodway fringe. Please see Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 8-9 and the FEMA floodway map submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-2.

Streams

- The closest stream is Alder Brook, approximately 230 feet to the west of the Project. The Project will result in no cutting or clearing of vegetation within 50 feet of the top of bank of surface water resources and will, therefore, have no adverse impact on streams.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 8.

Shorelines

- The Project is not near a shoreline.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 7-8.

Wetlands

- The Project is located more than 100 feet from a Class II wetland located to the west of the array and will have no adverse impact on Class II wetlands or associated buffers.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 9.

Soil Erosion

- The Project will require 0.84 acres of earth disturbance associated with the installation of the racking posts, underground conduit, utility poles, fence, panel board, and access road.

- Installation of the Project will be done in accordance with the Vermont Standards and Specifications for Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control and will follow ANR's Low Risk Site Handbook for Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control (August 2006).

- The Project will seek Low Risk coverage under the stormwater construction general permit.

- Please refer to the Site Plan.

Rare and Irreplaceable Natural Areas

- There are no rare and irreplaceable natural areas present within the project area.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 9.

Necessary Wildlife Habitat and Endangered Species

- There are no rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) plant or animal species at the Project site and the Project will have no adverse impact on RTE species.

- There is no necessary wildlife habitat in the Project vicinity and the Project will have no adverse impact on necessary wildlife habitat.

- Please refer to the Natural Resource Assessment prepared by Arrowwood Environmental, LLC, submitted with the Application as Exhibit SSVT-IX-5 at 9-10.

Traffic During Construction

- The Project will cause only a temporary small increase in traffic on Colonel Page Road during construction, which will be short in duration.
- The Project will not cause traffic congestion or unduly burden state or local transportation systems.
- No transportation related permits are needed for delivery of equipment or materials.

Development Affecting Public Investments

- GMP's electric distribution facilities and Colonel Page Road are the only public investments at or near the Project.
- The Project will not unnecessarily or unreasonably endanger the public or quasi-public investments in the facility, service, or lands, nor will it materially jeopardize or interfere with the function, efficiency, or safety of, or the public's use and enjoyment of or access to, any such facility, service, or lands.

Certification of Compliance with Notice and Filing Requirements

The Applicant certifies that the notice requirements of Rule 5.110(C) were met. Applicant mailed a 45-day pre-filing notice of this Application to the parties entitled to such notice under Rule 5.110(C).

Applicant served a copy of this Application and supporting materials on the parties entitled to such service under Rule 5.110(C). An Application Service List is enclosed with this Application.

Applicant sent written notice of the filing of this Application to adjoining landowners and the Selectboard as required by Rule 5.110(C). A Notice of Filing Service List is enclosed with this Application.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Proposed Findings and CPG

Adjoining Landowner List
The list was obtained from the most recent version of the Town's grand list as required by Rule 5.110(C).

Notice and Service Lists

Exhibits

Exhibit SSVT-IX-1 Site Plan and Elevations
Exhibit SSVT-IX-2 FEMA Map
Exhibit SSVT-IX-3 Sound Projections & Select Equipment Specifications
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Affidavit of Dori Barton, Natural Resource Assessment

[Signature Page Follows]

Dated at Rutland Town, Vermont this 11th day of April, 2016.

SOLARSENSE VT IX, LLC
By Its Attorney:

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Legal Counselors & Advocates, PLC
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