



Site Plan and Use Permit application materials are available [at this link](#)

Questions? Please contact Brian Madigan with any questions regarding the project: bmadigan@renewprop.com

Slayton Settlement Rd Solar A&B

Project Overview:

The Slayton Settlement Road Solar Project (“Project”) is a community-scale solar energy generating facility (7 MWac) that will occupy approximately 46-acres (35%) of a 131-acre parcel in Town of Lockport, NY (SBL 96.00-1-11). RPNY Solar 3, LLC has entered a long-term lease agreement (35 years) with the property owner to facilitate development of the Project. The Project is situated in the Town’s Agriculture Use District (“AG” zone). Solar projects are allowed in the AG zone subject to a [Special Use Permit and Site Plan](#) review by the Town of Lockport Planning Board.

The Project will interconnect to and fund upgrades to NYSEG’s existing electric distribution system. The power generated from this facility will be sold directly to local customers via the state’s Community Distributed Generation program (commonly referred to as “community solar”). This program allows customers to directly offset their energy use with local solar power while saving money on their electric utility bill. Electricity generated by the Project will power roughly 2,200 homes per year.

The Project will utilize single-axis tracking technology to allow the modules to efficiently track the sun throughout the day and maximize the efficiency of solar energy collection. The Project will use 19,448 solar modules and 56 string inverters which convert the sun’s energy into usable alternating current (AC) power. The project includes three step-up transformers located within the interior of the site. The modules will be mounted on a steel racking system, which will be anchored into the ground using driven steel piers. The overall height of the array will be no more than 8-feet tall.

Project Facts:

Local Source of Sustainable Energy: The Project will enhance and improve the resilience of the existing electrical grid by providing enough clean renewable energy to power and service roughly 2,200 homes per year. The upgrades to the electrical utility infrastructure by NYSEG will also improve reliability and durability of the utility grid for homes and businesses along Day Road and Slayton Settlement Road.

Site Plan Review Process: Renewable Properties submitted a Pre-Application for the Project on July 21, 2020 and subsequently filed a complete Site Plan and SUP permit application on December 17, 2020. The Project was reviewed by the Planning Board at the January 5, February 2, February 16, March 2, March 16, and April 6, 2021 meetings. The issuance of a special use permit is the sole responsibility of the Town of Lockport Planning Board. The Project will not produce greater than 25 MW (it’s only a 7 MWac sized project) and is therefore not subject to the NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting regulations - the permitting process that overrides local land use controls.

Setbacks: As illustrated throughout the submitted [site plan set](#), the proposed Project complies with all zoning setbacks required for the AG zoning district, including the 250-ft public road setback and the 500-ft setback from all residential structures.

Vegetative Screening: The Project design includes staggered rows of red cedar trees along the fence line of Slayton Settlement Road and Day Road. Sheet C007 of the Site Plan set details the species, number, height, spread and spacing for this visual screening. A planting plan is detailed on sheet C013 which can be reviewed [here](#).

Visual Simulations: Renewable Properties submitted visual renderings of the Project on February 18, 2021. The renderings depict existing and proposed conditions at year five (5) of operation. As shown in the renderings, the Project is not visible due to the setback distances and will be adequately screened from residences on Day Road and Slayton Settlement Road. The simulations can be reviewed [here](#).

Fencing: The Project design incorporates “agricultural style” perimeter fencing which will be 7-feet tall. Sample images of the fencing design are located [here](#). No chain link style or barbed wire fencing is proposed.

Property Values: Various studies have been conducted by independent real estate and assessment professionals that indicate solar projects do not result in negative impacts to neighboring property values. Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA)’s, one of the most reputable industry sources, white paper is included [here](#).

Pollinator Habitat: The Project is proposing to reseed the site with a pollinator plant meadow (“Buzz and Fuzz” seed mix or equivalent) using plant species native and endemic to western New York. This Project feature is intended to enhance the biological diversity of the subject property and respect the Agricultural District designation.

FEMA Floodplain: For insurance purposes, the Project is located outside of the FEMA designated 100-year floodplain. The Project will not result in any impacts to the floodplain and no project-related structures will be located within the floodplain.

Wetland and Biological Resources: A qualified professional biologist and wetland scientist investigated the site on June 15, 2020. The results of this site investigation included a full delineation of streams and wetlands on the property and directly informed the proposed project design which create no impacts to federal and state regulated wetlands. No designated critical habitat or suitable habitat for federal or state listed species was found present within the proposed Project area. Further, as illustrated on the proposed fencing detail on site plan sheet C010, a 2-inch gap will be maintained along the bottom of the agricultural-style perimeter fence to allow for small animals and other small wildlife to continue to be able to traverse through the site unimpeded.

Cultural Resources: A complete Phase IA/IB archeological survey was completed across the entire Project site in the fall of 2020. The design of the Project was modified to avoid archeological resources located during the surveys. Additionally, Renewable Properties is proposing a 50-foot buffer around each sensitive area in which no work will occur, and which will be protected by a construction fence until the project is completed. All surveys and mitigation proposals were submitted to the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NYSHPO), and on March 23, 2021, the New York State Division of Historic Preservation issued a letter on determining the proposed Project layout “would not impact archeological cultural resources.” On March 25, 2021 NYSHPO issued a letter determining the proposed Project layout “will have no adverse effect on historic resources...” with implementation of the proposed vegetative screening.

Hazardous Materials: Solar projects are comprised of widely used and [non-toxic](#) materials such as aluminum, steel, tempered glass, common plastics, and silicon. Solar panels are classified as “general waste,” which means they can be disposed of in a landfill. However, consistent with Niagara County’s goals for waste associated with solar projects, and to the extent practicable, the Project will recycle and repurpose all materials associated with the Project.

Noise: The power inverters and transformers will generate noise that will be effectively inaudible to neighboring properties. As illustrated in the equipment specification sheets submitted to the Town of Lockport on February 18, 2021, the equipment will generate noise of less than 69 decibels (db) when the observer is one (1) meter from the equipment. This “db level” is equivalent to normal conversation or a noisy office. The closest transformer to a residence is approximately 1,125 feet. The closest inverter is approximately 525 feet. Sound levels decrease as distance increases. Using standard noise distance attenuation calculators, our engineers determined that at these distances, the noise experienced by the nearest residences as a result of the operation of the Project would be roughly

24.14 db for the inverters, and 17.52 db for the transformers. This is an effectively inaudible level above background noise levels equivalent to someone whispering to you from over five (5) feet away. As the Project will be screened by a dense and staggered row of evergreen trees, this landscaping will further attenuate any noise generated from the Project. It should be noted that the tractors that currently operate on the project site operate at a decibel level of 90 db, which is four (4) times as loud as any noise that may be produced by on-site equipment.

Stormwater: Upon completion of major construction activities, the site will be stabilized and reseeded with “Buzz and Fuzz” seed mix. As very little soil disturbance or grading is proposed for the Project, the potential for Project induced increases to erosion and sedimentation is low to begin with. The Project has prepared a construction period stormwater pollution and prevention plan to ensure appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) are implemented during construction. Upon operation of the Project, the presence of the solar project will allow for the agricultural fields to remain stabilized with vegetation and fallowed for the duration of the project. This will promote nutrient and soil regeneration and provide more stable soils at the end of the Project useful life. The end to manure spreading in the fields will also present a significant benefit to the water quality of on-site and downstream waterbodies and wetlands.

Decommissioning: The Town of Lockport requires all solar applicants to prepare a [Decommissioning Plan](#), which specifically describes how a Project site will be restored at the end of a Project’s useful life. A Decommissioning & Restoration Plan was submitted to the Town on December 17, 2020. The Town also requires the posting of a financial surety bond with the Town in “2051 dollars” that will pay for the removal of the project and restoration of the site to an agricultural field should something happen to Renewable Properties. This money is in the Town’s hands before a shovel is put into the ground for construction. Further, Renewable Properties has committed to following the “Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Solar Energy Projects construction” developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project.

Community Solar Benefits: Residents, businesses, or a municipality may subscribe to a percentage of a solar project. Each month the utility applies credits to the subscriber’s bill based on the share of power produced by the solar project. The program reduces what the consumer pays to the utility and allows more people to access solar energy.

Projects such as the Slayton Settlement Road Solar Project provide added resiliency to the local grid, while simultaneously lowering subscriber energy bills, reducing carbon emissions, and providing distributed sources of locally produced electricity. This provides residents in communities such as Lockport peace of mind and greater autonomy to source their electricity locally, and greater consumer choice.
