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Town of Yorktown Planning Board
1974 Commerce St
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Dell Avenue Solar Farm
Project Introduction

Dear Planning Board Members,

The Dell Avenue Solar Farm is a 3,625 kWac fixed-tilt ground mount solar energy system and its associated facilities such as gravel access roads, chain-link fence, electrical equipment, stormwater management features, and landscaping. The project design also takes into account electrical and site plan considerations for a not yet planned battery energy storage system (BESS). The BESS is a *potential* future option that may be pursued after the solar array has been commercialized and operational, dependent on future state or local incentives specifically related to battery storage. The project, SCS Dell 014136 Yorktown LLC, earnestly seeks site plan and special use permit approvals from the Town of Yorktown Planning Board in accordance with Yorktown's commitment to green practices and its goal of promoting long-term sustainability.

Consistent with the Town Code, the project is characterized as a large-scale solar energy system between one and five megawatt AC capacity and will not exceed a land area larger than 20 acres. The project's limits of disturbance will be confined to 14.1 acres on a site encompassing a total acreage of 62.3 acres, owned by B&M Management Company Inc. The solar array area itself is expected to cover 9.1 acres and the height of any given module will not exceed 10 feet tall. The proposed site is situated immediately east of Dell Ave and adheres to R1-160 zone standards in conjunction with the large-scale solar code.

Dell Avenue Solar Farm commenced the project application process last year with a conceptual site plan and special use permit submission dated April 14, 2021 that also included a Short Environmental Assessment Form with the intent of determining SEQRA lead agency declaration. In the time since, the project has awaited and secured utility interconnection permission and community solar credit incentives. The project team eagerly looks forward to continuing its application and collaboratively undergoing the final planning review process with the Town of Yorktown Planning Board, the respective review bodies, and the Yorktown public.

Who Are We?

Sol Systems, LLC is a leading national solar energy firm that works with customers and partners to create a just energy transition. Sol Systems has built an established reputation of integrity and reliability across its development, infrastructure, and environmental commodity businesses. To date, the firm is operating and building over 1 GW of solar projects valued at more than $1 billion for Fortune 100 companies, municipalities, counties, utilities, universities, schools, and more. Formed in 2008, Sol Systems has been providing solar energy solutions for over 14 years and is strongly committed to developing & financing solar projects paired with community and environmental impact.

In 2019, Sol Systems and Arevon Energy formed a joint venture: Sol Customer Solutions, LLC (SCS). SCS combines Arevon Energy's significant balance sheet with Sol Systems' deep development expertise to create a platform that can efficiently develop, build, and operate energy generation assets. The partnership is focused on deploying institutional capital to offer some of the most competitive and compelling renewable energy solutions for municipal, commercial, corporate, and educational customers.

Sol Systems has developed 25 MWdc of solar projects in New York over the last decade ranging in size from 0.2 MW to 6.1 MW involving ground mount, rooftop, and carport systems, including a recent suite of 5 projects in Westchester County. SCS stands out compared to other developers thanks to four key differentiators:

1. **Vertically Integrated, Long-Term Partner**: Sol's joint venture with Arevon Energy vertically integrates the firm from development through long-term asset ownership. Sol will remain the main point of contact throughout the asset's life and will serve as a long-term partner to host communities.
2. **Financial Capability**: Sol's joint venture with Arevon, a renewable energy developer, owner & operator backed by APG and the CA State Teachers' Retirement System with almost 10 GW of renewables under management, allows the partnership to source guaranteed in-house capital for all aspects of the project, creating financing certainty.
3. **Industry Leading Expertise in Community Solar Project Development and Asset Management**: Sol's asset management team currently manages over 670 MW of solar across the US and Sol's current development pipeline includes at least 15MW-dc of community solar projects in the Northeast. Sol also works closely with Arevon's asset management team who manages and operates over 100 systems, totaling over 7,300 MW in the United States.
4. **Solar & Battery Storage Development Experience in New York**: Sol is an expert in solar development throughout New York, including in Westchester County and upstate. The Sol team has 25 MWdc of projects across the state that are either in development or fully operational.

Our mission is to work with customers and partners to create opportunities that support the social, economic, and environmental well-being of our communities. This mission is guided by the principles of sustainability, community impact, and collective action. We are proud and humbled to advance the Dell Avenue Solar Farm project as an opportunity for the Town of Yorktown to protect its public health and welfare by: taking advantage of a safe, abundant, carbon-free, and non-polluting energy resource; decreasing the cost of energy to its community constituents; reducing reliance on fossil fuels and curtailing their GHG emissions; and improving energy grid resiliency.

Project Purpose

New York is among the most ambitious states leading the nation's climate agenda through bold clean energy initiatives. The state's Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act (Climate Act) accelerates New York toward a mandate of a carbon-free power grid by 2040 with an interim goal of reaching 70% renewable electricity generation before 2030[1]. With a top-level objective to reduce GHG emissions down to 15% of 1990 levels by the year 2050, New York endeavors to deploy 6,000 MW of distributed solar capacity by 2025[1]. Anchored by its Clean Energy Standard, the state level agenda is unambiguous and scaling up solar energy is pivotal to success.

The Town of Yorktown values its naturalized areas and rural character, and it seeks to adopt renewable energy solutions – while curtailing fossil fuel emissions – to protect its public health and welfare. The Dell Avenue Solar Farm embodies New York state climate priorities, aligns with Yorktown's commitment to long-term focused sustainability infrastructure, and respects the Town's efforts to maintain enriching environmental quality.

The project is regretful to remove trees and looks forward to mutually working alongside the Town's Tree Conservation Advisory Committee on a shared solution. The project is limiting tree clearing to what is necessary for constructability and maintenance – no additional trees will be removed for the sake of increasing sunlight exposure to the solar arrays. It is anticipated that on the order of 1,000 trees across 14 acres require clearing for the solar site, yet the expected benefit of the project's avoided GHG emissions each year equal the carbon sequestration value of over 2,000 acres of U.S. forests. Proceeding with this solar project means that *each year* of its operation is equivalent to roughly 33,000 tree seedlings grown for 10 years. More information is available in the attached Preliminary Tree Mitigation Plan and Carbon Sequestration Calculations.

Overall GHG emissions displacement and carbon footprint reduction is the intention of the long-term sustainability sought by the Dell Avenue Solar Farm. Sol Systems is deeply devoted to social good and proud of the impact that will come from this community solar approach. The project will generate carbon-free renewable electricity for the residences and small businesses in Yorktown all the while increasing tax revenue for the Town.

Project Vision

The project, through the site plan application and special use permit review process, is dedicated to building a strong, collaborative relationship with the Town of Yorktown, the Planning Board, its respective review bodies, and the general public. This partnership will carry on beyond the development timeline into the construction phase and continue for the operational lifetime of the solar project, including eventual decommissioning. Sol Systems is uniquely structured to be the sole, long-term face of the Dell Avenue Solar Farm from start to finish. As such, our commitment to Yorktown extends into every aspect of the project and, with environmental and civil engineering expertise from TRC Companies, we're confidently well-positioned to design, build, operate, and maintain a world-class facility.

Based on diligence to date on the site location, its geographical/topographical constraints, initial environmental & wildlife assessments, proactive discussions with the New York Natural Heritage Program and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, including and early dialogue

with Yorktown Planning Board representatives, the project team has established several tenets core to decision-making on site plan development:

1. **No wetland impact.** There will be no work, tree clearance, or other disturbances in the delineated wetlands nor in their adjacent 100' buffer zone. Hence, a Wetland Permit Application is not foreseen. Due to the environmental sensitivity of the site overall, native & naturalized vegetation mixes, tree species, and pollinator habitats are envisioned to promote and foster a meadowland environment amidst the solar.
2. **No to very limited visual impact.** Initial site visits and line-of-sight analyses indicate little to no adverse affect on visuals & aesthetics from frontage roads (Saw Mill River Rd), public trails (North County Trailway), and nearby properties (at Dell Ave and at Hog Hill Rd). The civil site plan set includes a Landscape Plan addressing landscape screening and buffering
3. **As little as possible tree impact.** Site constraints minimize the available acreage adequate for solar arrays with sufficient space for constructability and maintenance needs. With the project fence line established, the limits-of-clearing boundary has been pushed up as close to it as possible to save as many existing trees as can be. Tree shading impacts to the solar energy system performance have been taken into account to the detriment of the overall electricity production in the name of preserving trees. Shading impacts are on the order of 3-4 times more severe on this project than is typical for Sol Systems ground mount projects.
4. **Only essential impervious surfaces to minimize stormwater impact.** Where possible, pervious surfaces will be utilized to reduce overall stormwater impact. This includes eliminating access roads beyond the minimum essential to asset maintenance, employing pervious gravel access roads (in lieu of paved), and using gravel pads under some equipment. The total impervious surface area incorporated into stormwater management (SWM) calculations includes a potential battery energy storage system (BESS) concrete equipment pad, therefore the SWM features proposed will be over-designed if the BESS never materializes in the future.

In conclusion, Sol Systems – through its Sol Customer Solutions entity SCS Dell 014136 Yorktown LLC – is excited to put forth the following site plan application and special use permit for Yorktown Planning Board review and comment. We look forward to working together to develop a welcome, meaningful, and successful Dell Avenue Solar Farm project that delivers long-lasting benefits to The Town of Yorktown and members of the community.

References

1. New York State. (2020). *New York State's Climate Act: Our Progress.* The Government of the State of New York. https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Progress