

In The Matter Of:
In the Matter of:
McLean County Zoning Board of Appeals

Hearing
January 2, 2019

ADVANTAGE REPORTING SERVICE
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1 McLEAN COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
 2 STATE OF ILLINOIS
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 8 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS had at the
 9 hearing of the McLean County Zoning Board of
 10 Appeals in Case SU-18-27, Case SU-18-28, Case
 11 SU-18-29, and Case SU-18-30, taken before Jill A.
 12 Bleskey, CSR-RPR, License Number 084-004430, a
 13 Notary Public in and for the State of Illinois, at
 14 the McLean County Government Center, 115 East
 15 Washington Street, City of Bloomington, County of
 16 McLean, and State of Illinois on the 2nd day of
 17 January, A.D., 2019 commencing at 7:00 p.m.
 18
 19 -----
 20
 21 Jill A. Bleskey, RPR
 22 CSR #084-004430
 23

1 MR. FINNIGAN: We're going to call
 2 the McLean County Zoning Board to order.
 3 Secretary, call the role.
 4 MR. DICK: Mark Judd.
 5 MR. FINNIGAN: Not here.
 6 MR. DICK: Brian Bangert.
 7 MR. BANGERT: Here.
 8 MR. DICK: Michael Kuritz.
 9 MR. KURITZ: Here.
 10 MR. DICK: Rick Dean. Julia Turner.
 11 MS. TURNER: Here.
 12 MR. DICK: Greg Zimmerman. Jim
 13 Finnigan.
 14 MR. FINNIGAN: Here.
 15 MR. DICK: Chris Carlton.
 16 MS. CARLTON: Here.
 17 MR. DICK: Mary Beth Taylor.
 18 MS. TAYLOR: Here.
 19 MR. FINNIGAN: We have enough for a
 20 quorum so we can conduct business. Has anyone
 21 looked at the minutes from last month? Somebody
 22 want to make a motion to approve?
 23 MR. KURITZ: So moved.

1 APPEARANCES
 2 Board Members:
 3 Mr. James Finnigan, Chair
 4 Mr. Phillip Dick, Secretary
 5 Ms. Chris Carlton, Member
 6 Ms. Julia Turner, Member
 7 Mr. Michael Kuritz, Member
 8 Mr. Rick Dean, Member
 9 Mr. Brian Bangert, Member
 10 Ms. Mary Beth Taylor, Member
 11 For the County:
 12 Mr. Jerry Stokes, County Engineer
 13 Mr. Trevor Sierra, State's Attorney
 14
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1 MS. TURNER: Second.
 2 MR. FINNIGAN: We have a motion by
 3 Kuritz, second by Turner. We have a roll call
 4 vote.
 5 MR. DICK: Bangert.
 6 MR. BANGERT: Yes.
 7 MR. DICK: Kuritz.
 8 MR. KURITZ: Yes.
 9 MR. DICK: Turner.
 10 MS. TURNER: Yes.
 11 MR. DICK: Finnigan.
 12 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.
 13 MR. DICK: Carlton.
 14 MS. CARLTON: Yes.
 15 MR. DICK: Taylor.
 16 MS. TAYLOR: Yes.
 17 MR. FINNIGAN: It's approved. Would
 18 anyone in the audience be here tonight with matters
 19 that are not on our agenda? And if they do, please
 20 come forward. Seeing none, we're going to move on.
 21 At this time I'm going to affirm our
 22 staff.
 23 (At which time, the Board was affirmed.)

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1 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. Will the
2 applicants for the first case come forward. Case
3 SU-18-27. Will the secretary call the case.
4 MR. DICK: This is Case Number
5 SU-18-27, AES DE Development Company NC, LLC with
6 special use to allow a solar powered generating
7 facility in the Agriculture District on property in
8 the northeast quarter, Section 20, Township 23
9 North, Range 2 East of the third principal meridian
10 located in Bloomington Township immediately
11 southwest of the intersection of the South Morris
12 Avenue and Brigham School Road.
13 Public notice of this hearing was
14 published in the Pantagraph on December 15th, 2018
15 as provided by law. All the other required
16 notifications have been made and the applicant has
17 paid the publication cost.
18 As the first exhibit I'd like -- I
19 have the application, which I think they were
20 mailed to each of you so I'm not going to pass this
21 at this time. Did you all receive it?
22 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.
23 MR. DICK: Okay. As the first

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1 attachment, I want to pass the plat map showing
2 where this property is located in Bloomington
3 Township. And a zoning map showing that this
4 property is in the Agriculture District. It's this
5 little brown piece right here. And there were site
6 plans included with your application so I won't
7 pass them either. They're the little foldouts.
8 And if you would like to see them I can pass these
9 as well. But since they were distributed I will
10 not.
11 And a land evaluation or site
12 assessment, or LESA report, was completed by the
13 Soil and Water Conservation District and the soil
14 score is listed here as well as the LESA completed
15 by staff. And I'll pass that. The EcoCAT from the
16 Illinois Department of Natural Resources was
17 completed and is part of the application as well so
18 I won't pass that. It's one of the foldouts in
19 there. There's no record of State-listed
20 threatened or endangered species, Illinois Natural
21 Area Inventory sites, or dedicated Illinois Nature
22 Preserves.
23 And a communication from the County

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1 Health Department indicating they have no problem
2 with this application. And a communication with --
3 between the applicant and the Historic Preservation
4 Agency indicating they've started the
5 communication. And I will go through the site
6 photos at this time.
7 This is the property located -- to
8 the south of it is I-74, to the east is South
9 Morris Avenue. And this is Morris -- Morris Avenue
10 facing north. Facing south. The property is to
11 the right. And this is the -- facing west across
12 the property. Facing southwest across the
13 property. And facing across the street to the
14 east, to the property across the road. And then
15 this is toward the south end of the property facing
16 west. And then facing northwest at the south --
17 toward the south end of the property. Again, this
18 is the property located on South Morris Avenue.
19 The size of the property -- this is
20 going to be proposed on is 40 acres. The
21 topography is gently sloping and drains to the
22 south and is currently in crop production. The
23 public road is an asphalt road 21 feet in width.

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1 The surrounding zoning is R-1 District on all
2 sides. The surrounding land use on all sides is
3 crop production.
4 For the land evaluation and site
5 assessment it had a soil score of 95.1 out of
6 100 points and for a site assessment it had a score
7 of 116 points out of a maximum of 200 points. This
8 gives it a score of 211.1 points out of a maximum
9 of 300 points. A score of 219 points or below
10 means that the property is of low value for
11 agricultural land protection. And that's primarily
12 because it's close to town, has a lot of
13 residential development -- developed land within a
14 mile of the property.
15 For the staff analysis, I have the
16 following report.
17 One. Proposed special use will not
18 be detrimental to or endanger the health, safety,
19 morals, comfort, or welfare of the public. And
20 this standard is met. The property is surrounded
21 by land and crop production that is in the R-1
22 single-family residence district. However, since
23 the zoning ordinance requires a solar farm to be

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1 200 feet from an R-1 District boundary the
2 applicant obtained a variance in Case ZV-18-06 on
3 November 6th, 2018 to allow the solar panels in the
4 proposed solar farm be 21 feet from an R-1
5 District. And the applicant proposes to establish
6 two co-located 2-megawatt solar power generating
7 facilities on this property. Except for the
8 200-foot setback requirement from an R-1 District,
9 the application will meet all of the county use
10 standards for a solar powered generating facility.
11 The application indicates that this
12 facility will contain rows of Photovoltaic cell
13 panels mounted on posts set in the ground. These
14 rows of panels are referred to as solar arrays.
15 AES Distributed Energy will mount the solar arrays
16 on a tracking system which allows them to follow
17 the sun throughout the day. The solar arrays will
18 be designed with an anti-reflective coating. The
19 applicant indicates that the solar arrays will be a
20 maximum of 10 feet in height.
21 The applicant submitted an EcoCAT
22 communication from the Illinois Department of
23 Natural Resources which indicates that there is no

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1 record of State-listed threatened or endangered
2 species, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites,
3 dedicated Illinois Nature Preserves, or Registered
4 Land and Water Reserves in the vicinity of the
5 project location.
6 A decommissioning plan that includes
7 an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement with
8 the Illinois Department of Agriculture and
9 financial assurance acceptable to the County will
10 need to be provided.
11 A contact person for the applicant
12 will need to be kept on file with the Department of
13 Building and Zoning for issues/complaints upon
14 completion of the facility.
15 The applicant has submitted a letter
16 to the Illinois Historic Preservation Office. The
17 projects are under review and can be found in Log
18 Number 0044113018.
19 Two. The proposed special use will
20 not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other
21 property in the immediate vicinity for purposes
22 already permitted or substantially diminish
23 property areas. This standard is met. The

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1 property is surrounded by land in crop production.
2 Ground cover that encourages pollination,
3 recommended by the McLean County Soil and Water
4 Conservation District, will need to be installed.
5 The solar arrays will be designed with an
6 anti-reflective coating.
7 Three. The proposed special use will
8 not impede the orderly development of the
9 surrounding property for uses permitted in the
10 district. This standard is met. The property is
11 surrounded by land in crop production. Nearby
12 property that is currently in crop production will
13 continue to be desirable for such use.
14 Four. Adequate utilities, access
15 roads, drainage and/or other necessary facilities
16 have been or will be provided. This standard is
17 met. The property has been approximately -- has
18 approximately 1,600 feet of frontage on the west
19 side of South Morris Avenue. The Bloomington
20 Township Fire Protection District will provide fire
21 protection for the subject property.
22 Pre-development drainage patterns will be retained.
23 The solar panels will be placed on the existing

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1 grade of the land. The applicant will provide
2 certified plans for storm water detention or
3 retention before a permit is issued for the
4 proposed solar power generating facility. The
5 applicant will need to have all field tile damaged
6 in the construction process repaired by a competent
7 contractor, with experience in such repair, during
8 the life of the solar farm. The applicant has
9 obtained a sign-off from the County Health
10 Department.
11 Five. Adequate measures have been or
12 will be taken to ingress and egress so designed as
13 to minimize traffic congestion in the public
14 streets. This standard is met. It appears that
15 safe site distance can be provided at the proposed
16 entrance. The applicant has been in communication
17 with the Bloomington Township Road Commissioner
18 about creating a road use agreement and obtaining
19 an entrance permit for the proposed solar farm.
20 Six. The establishment, maintenance,
21 and operation of the special use will be in
22 conformance with the intent of the district in
23 which the special use is proposed to be located.

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1 And this standard is met. The preamble states
2 "Provide for the location and govern the
3 establishment and operation of land use which are
4 compatible with agricultural and are of such a
5 nature that their location away from residential,
6 commercial and industrial areas is most desirable."
7 Seven. The proposed special use, in
8 all other respects, conforms to the applicable
9 regulations of the district in which it is located.
10 And this standard is met.
11 In conclusion, staff recommends that
12 this application meets all the standards set forth
13 in Article VIII, Section 350-56, which is the
14 Standards for Special Use Permits, provided
15 compliance with the following stipulations.
16 One. An entrance permit shall be
17 obtained from the Bloomington Township Road
18 Commissioner before a construction permit is used.
19 Two. The applicant shall provide
20 certified plans for storm water detention/retention
21 before a construction permit is issued.
22 Three. The applicant shall complete
23 consultation with the Illinois Historic

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1 Preservation Office before a construction permit is
2 issued.
3 Four. The applicant will have all
4 field tile damaged in the construction process
5 repaired by a competent contractor, with experience
6 in such repair, during the life of the solar farm.
7 Five. The solar panels shall be
8 installed with an anti-reflective coating.
9 Six. Ground cover that encourages
10 pollination that is recommended by the McLean
11 County Soil and Water Conservation District needs
12 to be installed.
13 Seven. A contact person for the
14 applicant will need to be kept on file with the
15 Department of Building and Zoning for
16 issues/complaints upon completion of the facility.
17 Eight. Development shall follow the
18 plans and documents submitted with the application
19 and with zoning regulations including Article VI,
20 Section 350-43.00(3) Use Standards for a solar
21 power generating facility.
22 That concludes my report.
23 MR. FINNIGAN: Would you like to be

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1 sworn in.
2 MR. MAYER: Yes, sir.
3 JOSHUA MAYER,
4 The witness, having been first duly
5 sworn upon his oath, testified as follows:
6 MR. FINNIGAN: Would you state your
7 name and address for the record?
8 MR. MAYER: Joshua Mayer, 455 1/2,
9 Arapahoe Avenue, Apartment A, Boulder, Colorado,
10 80302.
11 MR. FINNIGAN: You might have to go
12 over a little bit of that again.
13 MR. MAYER: 455 1/2, 1 over 2,
14 Arapahoe, A-R-A-P-A-H-O-E, Avenue, Apartment A,
15 Boulder, Colorado, 80302.
16 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Would you
17 like to present your case?
18 MR. MAYER: Yes. Ladies and
19 Gentlemen of the Board, it's a pleasure to be here
20 tonight. Hopefully you all are celebrating a very
21 Happy New Year, or start to it. I'll try to be
22 brief in this presentation, given that you have the
23 application materials, but I believe this may prove

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1 to be helpful as well. And I welcome any
2 additional questions you may have afterwards. So
3 I'll be presenting Kieser Solar 1 and 2 Community
4 Solar Farms located here in McLean County.
5 So I'll just briefly tell you about
6 AES Distributed Energy which is a whole owned
7 subsidiary of the AES Corporation, Fortune 500 coal
8 power company. Tell you a little bit about the
9 sites and the projects as well as what to expect
10 during construction, operation and maintenance, and
11 also the decommissioning phase as well as some of
12 the clear benefits for the community and the county
13 here should they be successful.
14 So as I mentioned, I'm a
15 representative of AES Distributed Energy. We are
16 fully committed to solar and solar plus storage
17 project development. We're located in Boulder,
18 Colorado. Our parent company is located in
19 Arlington, Virginia. AES DE has over 150 megawatts
20 operating currently nationwide for upwards of close
21 to a decade we've been at this. And in fact, just
22 on New Year's Eve we commissioned what's now the
23 largest operational solar plus facility out in

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1 Hawaii on the island of Kauai. So if you'd like to
2 read a little bit more about that feel free to
3 Google or reach out to me afterwards.
4 The AES Corporation is in 15
5 countries, four continents, 37 Gigawatts of
6 operating assets, everything from coal and natural
7 gas plants to hydroelectric facilities, wind farms,
8 and solar power plants. We've been around since
9 1981. So decades of experience.
10 So this is not Bloomington but this
11 is at least a representation for what a single axis
12 tracking solar farm looks like. This is almost
13 three times the size of what we're proposing but at
14 least it gives you a little bit of a visual
15 perspective.
16 As you saw previously, you know,
17 we're looking to locate this in the southern
18 portion of just south of Bloomington, McLean
19 County. This substation is just -- located just to
20 the north of the property. If you go back just one
21 slide you'll see where it is with the little pin
22 drop there. It's obviously a strategic interest to
23 be located as close to substations as possible.

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1 And proceeding forward.
2 So as I said, we're looking for
3 approval, special use permit approval for two
4 co-located projects. You are allowed to co-locate
5 under the rules of the IPA program for community
6 solar. So this would be Kieser 2, here in the
7 north, and then you'd also then later see Kieser
8 Solar 1 -- actually have the names backwards on
9 there -- to the south.
10 There's two alternate possibilities
11 for interconnection, most likely we'd just tie in
12 that three-phase distribution line that's on South
13 Morris Avenue. However, if you just go one slide
14 further there is an alternative that we're going to
15 explore with Ameren to see if there's a benefit to
16 it, actually trenching and going north straight to
17 the substation. The first one is the more likely
18 one.
19 This is the southern farm. Because
20 this will be going through a lottery process, it's
21 a little bit up in the air as to whether or not
22 these projects can be awarded energy contracts with
23 the utilities in the state, with Ameren in this

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1 case. But it's anticipated that if we're only
2 awarded one then we would build the southern one
3 first and then the second one if we're successful
4 with that award as well.
5 So just a few other quick data
6 points. So to put this a little bit in
7 perspective. We're looking at close to 700 solar
8 modules for each one of these solar farms. These
9 do not require on-site personnel. We're able to
10 track the performance of these solar power plants
11 remotely and receive instantaneous notifications if
12 there's any kind of operational discrepancy. We
13 contract with regional operation maintenance
14 partners to then dispatch to the site should there
15 be immediate attention required.
16 We only drive posts on a very small
17 total percentage of the whole site as far as ground
18 penetration. The only place where you have the use
19 of concrete would be in a limited location of the
20 transformer pad, which is a quite small area.
21 We'll have security fencing to protect from
22 unwanted or unwarranted entry, and there would be a
23 small access road of 20-foot generally with what's

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1 called minus four inch rock to enter off the
2 roadway and to prevent any tracking of mud onto
3 South Morris Avenue. And then basically just a
4 road base to access the transformer so as to not
5 create any damage to the ground from vehicles
6 entering the site.
7 We will of course adhere to best
8 practices for seeding the site after construction
9 trying to establish non-invasive, shade tolerate,
10 and pollinator friendly perennial grass species.
11 And we will not be performing any grading so we
12 will build along the contours of the land and will
13 not affect drainage flow in any way.
14 So very quickly, the construction
15 timeframe. Basically to do the primary phase of
16 construction, all the mechanical and electrical
17 work, is about two to three months, so not too
18 much. We would be targeting this summer already to
19 do that if we are successful in the first round of
20 rural energy credit contract awards. The total
21 construction time period can extend by a few more
22 months at the will of the utility and how quickly
23 they are able to build their end of the

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1 interconnection upgrades and to commission the
2 site.
3 During the construction period you
4 could expect to have 20 to 40 vehicles. But as I
5 said, there's no on-site personnel once these are
6 operating so thereafter we expect, you know, five
7 to seven visits per year mostly for vegetative
8 management but about one to two site visits per
9 year just to inspect the facility, check inverters,
10 make sure everything is operating and preventative
11 maintenance.
12 These are silent systems, they do not
13 produce glare. And we will not be requiring any
14 additional utilities or services from the county.
15 Decommissioning is clearly a concern
16 not only of the landowner but of the county in the
17 long run. So not only would we ethically feel
18 responsible for making sure that we remove these
19 systems at the end of their lifetime but the State
20 of Illinois is also requiring that we sign an
21 agricultural mitigation agreement with the
22 landowners which will cover the full
23 decommissioning of the site and also mandates that

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1 we put in place financial security with McLean
2 County in the case that, you know, AES was not
3 responsive to clearing the site financial security
4 would be in place for the County to step in.
5 And then just some of the final
6 project benefits which are significant. Based on
7 our calculations, each one of these projects would
8 be -- you know, year one starting to pay a little
9 bit over \$11,000, so close to \$22,000 per year if
10 we were successful with both. Of course we're
11 adding additional renewable energy to the grid and
12 also helping the state fulfill its goals to the
13 Future Energy Job Acts.
14 What makes this a community solar
15 farm is that we're able to offer residents and
16 businesses locally and county and through Ameren
17 territory savings. We can discount the cost of
18 electricity at the current pay by subscribing to
19 these projects. And there will be significant job
20 stimulation during the construction phase and
21 developmental phase of these projects. You know,
22 we expect a capital investment of upwards of 4
23 million for each one of these and close to 1 and a

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1 half, 1.4 million directly to local employment,
2 rental of equipment, and other services.
3 And just some other fun facts. So
4 each one of these projects, to help you
5 conceptualize this, it can produce enough energy to
6 basically power 500 American -- typical or average
7 American homes annual electricity usage. So we're
8 looking at close to 1,000 homes if both projects
9 are successful. And that also removes upwards of
10 700 passenger vehicles off the road per year and
11 avoids the emissions from close to three and a half
12 million pounds of coal being burned. So clean air,
13 good jobs, and additional resources for the
14 community.
15 So with that, it would be my pleasure
16 to answer any questions that you may have and I
17 appreciate your time and patience.
18 MS. TURNER: I have a couple of
19 questions. One is on your removing the vehicles
20 from the road, do you mean it's the equivalent of
21 removing the emissions of those vehicles?
22 MR. MAYER: Yes. The emissions,
23 that's what I meant to say.

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1 MS. TURNER: Okay. And two, do other
2 states have this lottery process that you're in, is
3 Illinois similar to other states?
4 MR. MAYER: It's unique. So Illinois
5 will not be the first state to do community solar.
6 Currently you have states like Colorado, Minnesota,
7 Massachusetts that kind of paved the way. Illinois
8 has had bidder process of trying to blend kind of
9 best features of all of those policies from those
10 different states. However, there's always things
11 to be learned and this lottery is unique to
12 Illinois.
13 MS. TURNER: Okay. Have you ever
14 been granted the right, or the go ahead, for solar
15 farms as a company, has your company, and then not
16 built them?
17 MR. MAYER: So traditionally AES has
18 generally acquired projects at construction ready
19 stage. What we're doing here in Illinois is
20 starting to do a development stage.
21 MS. TURNER: Okay.
22 MR. MAYER: If your question's in
23 reference to should we receive a special use permit

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1 is there a chance we do not build it? There is a
2 chance, the biggest one being that we receive a
3 renewable energy credit contract for the utilities
4 because that's a primary revenue driver. If we are
5 awarded that, you know, we're committed to getting
6 this done should there not be any other unforeseen
7 circumstances.

8 MS. TURNER: So just to clarify the
9 process. You could be awarded a lottery winner but
10 still not have a contract with Ameren or another
11 electric?

12 MR. MAYER: No. The lottery is
13 specifically for --

14 MS. TURNER: For that?

15 MR. MAYER: -- for that.

16 MS. TURNER: Okay. So if you're
17 granted a lottery winner it means you have a
18 contract?

19 MR. MAYER: Correct. And there was
20 -- there has been confusion over this because only
21 within the last month or two there was this idea of
22 something called the golden ticket where IPA and
23 ICC I think were trying to incorporate developer's

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1 feedback and they were going to allow for people to
2 switch out projects. So if they're awarded, you
3 know, Project X and at the end of the day they
4 think Project Y is a better project they could do
5 that. I think there was some consternation around
6 that and in the last round of comments they've
7 actually now struck that. So it's to encourage
8 people to only bid their best projects. So I think
9 you would expect that the ones that are awarded
10 will get built. We can't switch them with other
11 ones.

12 MS. TURNER: Okay. Golden ticket
13 just brought visions of Oompas out there. All
14 right. Thank you.

15 MR. MAYER: Thank you.

16 MR. KURITZ: So how many awards does
17 Ameren have to put out?

18 MR. MAYER: Good question. So in the
19 first three blocks -- the program's kind of
20 partitioned into blocks. And there may be
21 additional blocks later on. But for Ameren, in the
22 first three blocks, there's upwards of 55 megawatts
23 anticipated to be awarded. So if you do math -- if

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1 you assume is 2-megawatts AC, which is the largest
2 you can do for community solar, you know, that's
3 upwards of 26 projects or so. Twenty-six, 27
4 projects in the first three blocks.

5 MR. KURITZ: So you have to have your
6 project permitted and ready to go so in case you
7 win then you're --

8 MR. MAYER: Yes. So in order to
9 submit in the program there's essentially three key
10 criteria that the IPA is looking for otherwise
11 they'll reject your application. So that's site
12 control. So that's a signed option agreement,
13 which we now have in place with Kieser Farms. It's
14 also any discretionary permits, which in this case
15 would be a special use permit from McLean County.
16 And then also interconnection agreement from
17 Ameren. And we just received that in the last
18 couple of days as well. There are additional
19 studies and other development work to be done but
20 those are the ones you can participate in the
21 program.

22 MR. KURITZ: Thank you.

23 MR. MAYER: Thank you.

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1 MR. BANGERT: Do you know what
2 percentage of Illinois' power is supposed to be
3 derived from solar energy?

4 MR. MAYER: From the Future Energy
5 Jobs Act?

6 MR. BANGERT: Yeah.

7 MR. MAYER: Yeah. So don't quote me
8 directly but it's supposed to be quite close to I
9 think 20 percent by 2020 and then I believe they're
10 trying to increase that to 30 percent by 2030. I
11 need to double check those numbers but it's a
12 significant jump. There's currently only 80
13 megawatts operating in the state solar energy
14 access. So there's going to be a significant
15 economic boom in the state over the next several
16 years for solar energy construction.

17 MR. BANGERT: Are you familiar with
18 the AIMA agreement?

19 MR. MAYER: Yes, sir.

20 MR. BANGERT: Do you know what the
21 AIMA says about how deep the underground utilities
22 need to be removed in relation to anything
23 connected to the --

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1 MR. MAYER: Sure. So for underground
2 cabling it's a function of the classification of
3 the soil above it. But generally it's three to
4 five feet. If it's considered prime agricultural
5 land then you need to go down about five feet. I
6 believe I attached the AIMA as an appendix if you'd
7 like to reference some of the direct -- all the
8 examples because there's several of them. But
9 generally it's three to five feet.

10 MR. BANGERT: Thank you.

11 MR. MAYER: Thank you.

12 MR. FINNIGAN: You've spoke about it
13 a little bit but could you tell us why you picked
14 this site over another?

15 MR. MAYER: Sure. So, there's
16 several attractive sites in the State of Illinois.
17 This one is attractive in large part because of its
18 -- well, several reasons. Large part because of
19 the proximity to substation. Generally the further
20 away from a substation you go and on a radial
21 three-phase line you can suffer, you know,
22 something called voltage flicker if you're
23 injecting power into the grid, you know, five, ten

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1 miles away from a substation. And three-phase --
2 approximately three-phase is also important, you
3 cannot tie into a single phase, which you see in a
4 lot of rural areas where there's not a significant
5 load. And then, you know, you want to be cognizant
6 of your other surroundings. So having an
7 interstate to the south is obviously helpful and
8 then mostly agricultural around, agricultural land
9 nearby and not being, you know, directly adjacent
10 to a significant subdivision is helpful as well.

11 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Any other
12 questions? Questions from staff? Would anyone in
13 the audience have questions? Come forward. Would
14 anybody in the audience want to give testimony in
15 this case? Seeing none, we can move on. Would you
16 like to make a closing statement?

17 MR. MAYER: Just thank you all
18 members of the board and attendees to this hearing.
19 Thank you for your time.

20 MR. FINNIGAN: All right. Thank you.
21 This part of the hearing is closed and we can
22 deliberate on the case.

23 You want any discussion before we go

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1 to the standards? I'll just read them off. If
2 anybody has a problem with them, let me know.
3 Standard 1. Standard 2. Standard 3. Four. Five.
4 Six. Seven.

5 MR. KURITZ: I move that we recommend
6 approval of SU-18-27 along with the stipulations
7 put on by staff.

8 MS. TURNER: I second that.

9 MR. FINNIGAN: We have a motion by
10 Kuritz, second by Turner. Can we have a roll call
11 vote.

12 MR. DICK: Bangert.

13 MR. BANGERT: Yes.

14 MR. DICK: Kuritz.

15 MR. KURITZ: Yes.

16 MR. DICK: Dean.

17 MR. DEAN: I think I'll pass on this
18 one with no vote.

19 MR. DICK: Finnigan.

20 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.

21 MR. DICK: Carlton.

22 MS. CARLTON: Yes.

23 MR. DICK: Taylor.

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1 MS. TAYLOR: Yes.

2 MR. DICK: Motion passes.

3 MR. FINNIGAN: We got one more.
4 Forgot Turner.

5 MR. DICK: Turner.

6 MS. TURNER: Yes.

7 MR. DICK: Sorry about that.

8 MR. FINNIGAN: Motion passed. Phil
9 explains what -- from here on.

10 MR. DICK: This goes to the County
11 Board on the third Tuesday of January at 5:30 p.m.
12 It will be on the consent agenda unless one of the
13 County Board members pulls it for specific
14 discussion on that particular case. You don't need
15 to attend, you probably couldn't give testimony
16 even if you did. But you can call our office the
17 next morning and we will tell you what happened.
18 And I'll be sending you a letter with the results.
19
20
21
22
23

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1 MR. FINNIGAN: We have applicants for
2 Case SU-18-28? Would they come forward. When
3 you're ready, call the case.
4 MR. DICK: This is Case Number
5 SU-18-28, the application of ASD McLean Illinois
6 Solar IV, LLC by Amp Solar Development,
7 Incorporated for a special use to allow a solar
8 power generating facility in the Agriculture
9 District on property in the southwest quarter of
10 36, Township 23 North, Range 1 East of the third
11 principal meridian located in Dale Township
12 immediately southeast of 1075 East Road,
13 approximately .5 miles south of 850 North Road.
14 Public Notice of this hearing was
15 published in the Pantagraph on December 15, 2018 as
16 provided by law and all the other required
17 notifications have been made and the applicant has
18 paid the publication cost.
19 I did distribute applications,
20 complete applications to all, so I won't pass this
21 application. I will pass a plat map showing where
22 this property is located in Dale Township and a
23 zoning map showing that this property is located in

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1 the Agriculture District in this little red area
2 here. I won't pass the site plan since there was
3 one attached to your application. But it's
4 adjacent here to Interstate I-55 and the county
5 highway that comes across here in Dale Township.
6 And a report from the Soil and Water
7 Conservation District with the soil score and a
8 land evaluation site assessment that was completed
9 by me and the staff. And there's an EcoCAT IDNR
10 report that was submitted with the application that
11 was also in each of your applications and that's a
12 communication that there are no endangered species
13 on the property and the consultation is terminated.
14 So I won't pass that either.
15 Communication from the Health
16 Department indicating that they're okay with this
17 application, which I will pass. And a
18 communication that the applicant submitted with the
19 application indicating that they've been in touch
20 with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and
21 have submitted this with their application.
22 And I will show some of the photos of
23 the property at this time. When I was going out

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1 with this site visit it was a very foggy day so
2 you're not going to see a lot of real clear photos
3 but I decided to go with it any way. This is where
4 the property's located. You see this is the
5 Shirley interchange, if you want to know where this
6 is located. And this is I-55 to the west and
7 County Highway 41 frontage is on this property.
8 And if you see to your right -- this is facing
9 south and you can see the interstate highway on the
10 right and this is the county highway. And then to
11 the north that's county highway -- or the
12 Interstate 55 is to the left and the property is
13 the -- the subject property is to the right. And
14 this is facing like southwest -- southeast, excuse
15 me. And then straight west -- east, excuse me.
16 I'll go over the staff report at this
17 time. The topography of the property is relatively
18 flat. It drains to the south. It's currently in
19 crop protection. The public road is an asphalt
20 road 21 feet in width. The property is surrounded
21 by land and crop production. The soil score of the
22 property is 97.7 points out of 100 and the land
23 evaluation site assessment for the site assessment

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1 is 162 points out of 200 giving it a score of 259.7
2 points out of a maximum of 300 points. A LESA
3 report indicates that a score of 230 points and
4 above means that the property is of high value for
5 agricultural land protection.
6 The staff analysis as applies to this
7 report is as follows.
8 One. The proposed special use will
9 not be detrimental to or endanger the health,
10 safety, morals, comfort, or welfare of the public.
11 This standard is met. The applicant proposes to
12 establish two co-located 2-megawatt solar power
13 generating facilities on this property, which will
14 meet all of the County setback requirements and use
15 standards for a solar power generating facility.
16 The application indicates that this
17 facility will contains rows of Photovoltaic cell
18 panels mounted on posts set in the ground. These
19 rows of panels are referred to as solar arrays.
20 Amp Solar Development will mount the solar arrays
21 on the tracking system, which allows them to follow
22 the sun throughout the day. The solar arrays will
23 be designed with an anti-reflective coating. And

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1 the applicant indicates that the solar arrays will
2 be a maximum of 15 feet in the height.
3 The applicant submitted an EcoCAT
4 communication from the Illinois Department of
5 Natural Resources which indicates that there is no
6 record of State-listed threatened or endangered
7 species, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites,
8 dedicated Illinois Nature Preserves, or registered
9 Land and Water Reserves in the vicinity of the
10 project location, and that the consultation is
11 terminated.
12 A decommissioning plan that includes
13 an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement with
14 the Illinois Department of Agriculture and
15 financial assurance acceptable to the County need
16 to be provided.
17 The application indicates that they
18 will provide a contact person to be kept on file
19 with the Department of Building and Zoning for
20 issues and complaints upon the completion of the
21 facility.
22 The application indicates that a
23 one-mile search from the site was conducted using

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1 the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
2 Geographic Information System and no historic sites
3 were identified.
4 Two. The proposed special use will
5 not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other
6 property in the immediate vicinity for purposes
7 already permitted or substantially diminish
8 property values in the immediate area. And this
9 standard is met. The property is surrounded by
10 land in crop protection. Ground cover that
11 includes native species, encourages pollination,
12 recommended by the McLean County Soil and Water
13 Conservation District, will need to be installed.
14 Three. The proposed special use will
15 not impede the orderly development of the
16 surrounding property for uses permitted in the
17 district. And this standard is met. Nearby land
18 in crop production will continue to be desirable
19 for such use.
20 Four. Adequate facilities, access
21 roads, drainage and other necessary facilities have
22 been or will be provided. And this standard is
23 met. The property has approximately 1,380 feet of

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1 frontage on the southeast side of 1075 East Road,
2 which is also County Highway 41. The Dale Township
3 Fire District will provide fire protection for the
4 subject property. Pre-development drainage
5 patterns will be retained as much as possible. The
6 applicant will provide certified plans for storm
7 water detention or retention before a permit is
8 issued for the proposed solar power generating
9 facility. The applicant will need to have all
10 field tile damaged in the construction process
11 repaired by a competent contractor, with experience
12 in such repair, during the life of the solar farm.
13 The applicant has obtained a sign-off from the
14 County Health Department.
15 Five. Adequate measures have been or
16 will be taken to provide ingress and egress so
17 designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the
18 public streets. And this standard is met. It
19 appears that safe site distance can be provided at
20 the proposed entrance. The applicant has been in
21 communication with the County Engineer and will
22 need to obtain an entrance permit from him before a
23 construction permit will be issued for the proposed

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1 solar farm.
2 Six. The establishment, maintenance,
3 and operation of the special use will be in
4 conformance with the intent of the district in
5 which the special use is proposed to be located.
6 And this standard is met. The preamble states,
7 "Provide for the location and govern the
8 establishment and operation of land uses which are
9 compatible with agricultural and are of such a
10 nature that their location away from residential,
11 commercial, and industrial areas is most
12 desirable."
13 Seven. The proposed special use, in
14 all other respects, conforms to the application
15 regulations of the Agriculture District. And this
16 standard is met. According to the Zoning
17 Ordinance, "The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment
18 System, or LESA, has been designed to provide a
19 rational process for assisting local officials in
20 making farmland conversion decisions through the
21 local zoning process." Although this property has
22 a high LESA score, the applicant indicates that a
23 landscape plan will include a non-invasive ground

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1 cover that is suitable for the local environment,
2 supportive of pollinators, and will reduce the
3 dependence of mowing and spraying for weeds and
4 invasive species. After the subject property is
5 returned to its original condition, as required by
6 the Zoning Ordinance, the land can be returned to
7 crop production. It was reported that up to
8 35 percent of corn grown in McLean County was used
9 to make ethanol. Harvesting the sun to produce
10 electricity in the Agriculture District with solar
11 farms is similar, and another way to produce
12 significant value from farmland in addition to
13 producing corn and soybean crops.

14 In conclusion, staff recommends that
15 this application meets the standards set forth in
16 Article VIII, Section 350-56, which is the
17 Standards for Special Use Permits, provided
18 compliance with the following stipulations:

19 One. An entrance permit shall be
20 obtained from the County Engineer before a
21 construction permit is issued.

22 Two. The applicant shall provide
23 certified plans for storm water detention/retention

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1 before a construction permit is issued.

2 Three. The applicant shall complete
3 consultation with the Illinois Historical
4 Preservation Agency before a construction permit is
5 issued.

6 Four. The applicant shall have all
7 field tile damage in the construction process
8 repaired by a competent contractor, with experience
9 in such repair, during the life of the solar farm.

10 Five. The solar panels shall be
11 installed with an anti-reflective coating.

12 Six. Ground cover that encourages
13 pollination that is recommended by the McLean
14 County Soil and Water Conservation District needs
15 to be installed.

16 Seven. A contact person for the
17 applicant will need to be kept on file with the
18 Department of Building and Zoning for
19 issues/complaints upon completion of the facility.

20 Eight. Development shall follow the
21 plans and documents submitted with the application
22 and with zoning regulations including Article VI,
23 Section 350-43.00(3), which are the Use Standards

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1 for a solar power generating facility in the Zoning
2 Ordinance.

3 That concludes my report.

4 MR. FINNIGAN: Will all three of you
5 be giving testimony?

6 MR. RICKARD: Yes.

7 MR. FINNIGAN: Why don't we just do
8 -- can we just swear all three of you in at the
9 same time?

10 MR. RICKARD: Yes.

11 (At which time, Geoff Miller, Luke
12 Rickard, and Clay Schuler, were duly sworn upon
13 their oaths.)

14 MR. FINNIGAN: Would you state your
15 name and address for the record.

16 MR. MILLER: Geoff Miller, G-E-O-F-F,
17 M-I-L-L-E-R. 12535 West 31st Avenue, Wheat Ridge,
18 Colorado, 80215.

19 MR. DICK: Could you spell Wheat
20 Ridge, please?

21 MR. MILLER: W-H-E-A-T, space,
22 R-I-D-G-E.

23 MR. DICK: R-I-D-G-E?

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1 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir.

2 MR. FINNIGAN: Go ahead.

3 MR. RICKARD: Luke Rickard. That's
4 spelled R-I-C-K-A-R-D. Address is 5352 Garrison
5 Street in Arvada, Colorado, 80002. Arvada is
6 spelled A-R-V-A-D-A.

7 MR. SCHULER: Clay Schuler, 3697
8 Darlene Court, Aurora, Illinois, 60504.

9 MR. DICK: Can you spell your last
10 name?

11 MR. SCHULER: Schuler is
12 S-C-H-U-L-E-R.

13 MR. FINNIGAN: You can go ahead and
14 present your case.

15 MR. RICKARD: Yes, sir. Good
16 evening, Members of the Board. Happy New Year.
17 It's good to be with you all again. Thank you all
18 for your time tonight. We have a brief
19 presentation. I know you've already seen about 100
20 of these this year already but for the benefit of
21 attendees, public, and the audience we can run
22 through some information to describe the facilities
23 we'd like to install.

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1 So about Amp. Amp develops flexible
2 clean energy infrastructure. Globally we have
3 offices here in the U.S. Corporate headquarters
4 are in Toronto, Canada. We also have offices in
5 Tokyo and in India and also in Sydney as well.
6 Currently we have over 520 megawatts
7 of assets, generation assets in our portfolio and
8 we have -- in our investment portfolio we have
9 considerably more than that, we have four times
10 more than that. Next slide, please.
11 Just a brief slide showing areas of
12 the country -- areas of the world in which Amp has
13 operations, marketing presence. Amp's strategy is
14 to provide flexible dispatchable energy services
15 across the grid. As the way in which power is
16 consumed changes there will be a need for, you
17 know, more diverse types of energy. So Amp offers
18 solar PV, battery storage where the power is taken
19 from the solar and is stored in batteries for
20 placement into the grid later. Microgrids where,
21 you know, our renewable energy systems can power
22 entire grid systems and also co-generation projects
23 as well. Primarily -- those are primarily natural

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1 gas powered.
2 In terms of a brief overview of
3 community solar, for those in the audience who
4 weren't aware. Solar modules supported by single
5 axis tracking systems which track the sun from east
6 to west, so they face east in the morning, lie flat
7 at noon, and face west in the afternoon, evening.
8 Tracking system is supported on steel posts and is
9 converted to AC electricity for export to the grid.
10 For community solar specifically, the electricity
11 generated is assigned -- you know, has a dollar
12 value and that dollar value is applied to the
13 energy bills of subscribers to the solar garden
14 itself. They can -- this allows people who
15 subscribe to the solar garden to save money on
16 their energy bills and also support renewable
17 energy.
18 In terms of the solar modules
19 themselves. These are made of anti-reflective
20 glass with an aluminum frame, some copper inside
21 and crystalline silicone as the primary DC current
22 generator. They're certified to withstand
23 significant wind and snow loads and they are

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1 roughly six by three feet in size.
2 The racking system is installed on
3 steel supports. Typically we use ground screws
4 which are easier to remove when it comes to
5 decommissioning. The positioning of the solar
6 modules through the day is controlled by motors and
7 sensors which track the position of the sun in the
8 sky. And that allows us to maximize the amount of
9 solar we can harvest from the facility.
10 The inverter is the machine that
11 changes the current from DC to AC. We use fully
12 NEC compliant, UL listed equipment and the IPA is
13 calling for smart grid features in the inverters,
14 but we are using -- these are the ones we're
15 proposing. It allows us some remote service and
16 monitoring during operations. These inverters that
17 we propose are fairly quiet, they're rated to not
18 be much larger than 60 decibels at one meter.
19 The majority of the other equipment
20 is located on a concrete pad such as is shown here.
21 The equipment pad I'm referring to is the one on
22 the left here. This is where the remote monitoring
23 system as well as any control system, axillary

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1 power, and safety control equipment. On the right
2 is a typical result of a step-up transformer that's
3 provided by the utility which steps up the power to
4 grid voltage for export.
5 The other components of a solar site
6 are fairly simple. You have access roads. We
7 specify all weather gravel surfaces which can bear
8 the loads of the utility trucks. These are usually
9 for to bear the loads of utility trucks. There are
10 internal roads and turnarounds with the same
11 surface and the same specifications. These often
12 -- these will carry -- these will have enough room
13 for any emergency vehicles to turn around in as
14 well. There will be fencing and gates in order to
15 meet national electric code requirements and we
16 don't propose any permanent or perimeter lighting.
17 If there is any lighting on site it will just be a
18 task light located at the equipment bay.
19 In terms of other characteristics of
20 community solar. We feel like we have the ability
21 to be a good neighbor to the surrounding uses and
22 landowners that we are next to. We're not a major
23 source of noise pollution during operations or

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1 light pollution, we don't generate odors that are
2 typically associated with agricultural or
3 industrial uses and we aren't a generator of heavy
4 traffic during operations either.
5 There's a land conservation aspect to
6 solar development where once the facility is
7 decommissioned we can remove all of the equipment
8 and the land can be returned to agricultural use.
9 And as well it also has community benefits as well
10 allowing people to save money on their solar
11 bill -- on their electricity bills and also
12 benefits to the local community as well.
13 So this is the slide specific to the
14 case in hand. As our staff has described, it's
15 located in Dale Township. We're proposing 2, 2,000
16 kilowatt DC fronts, 2 two-megawatt plants. Current
17 land use is agricultural. And we are planning on
18 disturbing a small portion of the overall parcel.
19 Thank you for your consideration.
20 I'm happy to answer any additional questions at
21 this time.
22 MR. FINNIGAN: Questions from the
23 Board?

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1 MR. DEAN: You referenced before the
2 meter and post meter. I was -- I didn't understand
3 that. In one of your earlier slides. The projects
4 you develop are both before and after. This is
5 before or after project?
6 MR. RICKARD: This is -- sorry. Go
7 ahead.
8 MR. MILLER: So I think the reference
9 was towards larger scale utility production, much
10 larger than this where that would be what they call
11 -- well, the alternative would be behind the meter.
12 So the meter in this case would be, for example, at
13 your house where the solar panels on your roof
14 generate electricity, rolling back your meter.
15 MR. DEAN: Thank you. That clears it
16 up for me.
17 MS. TURNER: Just out of curiosity.
18 Do the panels move on a foggy day like that? I
19 mean, you said they're tracking the sun. Do they
20 actually track the sun or are they set up on
21 timers?
22 MR. MILLER: They'll track the sun.
23 It might be behind a cloud but it'll try to --

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1 they'll try to track the sun. It'll still produce
2 in the clouds when it's foggy or whatnot just not
3 as well. But it does move with where the sun
4 should be unless there's height minimums or
5 something like that.
6 MS. TURNER: And then along the same
7 lines as before. If you were awarded this project,
8 if you got the lottery win, would you move forward
9 with this project or do you have to pick amongst
10 different projects within the state, would you
11 prioritize this?
12 MR. RICKARD: Yes. Well, as the
13 previous applicant stated, we're not able to pick
14 and choose, you know, which projects we get
15 awarded, that's done for us in terms of the lottery
16 awards. And once we have a contract with the
17 utility, that would be the project that we build.
18 MS. TURNER: But say you were awarded
19 seven projects and you only wanted to do six in the
20 state. Wouldn't that be wonderful. But would you
21 choose -- do you have a limit as to how many you
22 would do in the state? You're just a bigger
23 company so just something I'm wondering.

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1 MR. RICKARD: Well, yeah, that would
2 be wonderful if we were to get that many awards out
3 of the program. But no, there is no limit
4 internally for us as to how much we would develop
5 and build in the state.
6 MS. TURNER: And then without giving
7 numbers. Just what percentage of your contracts
8 that you're pursuing, or projects that you're
9 pursuing, are above I-80 versus south of I-80? Do
10 you know?
11 MR. RICKARD: I'd say all of our
12 projects are south of I-80.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: I just wonder where
14 the substation is that you're going to hook on to
15 with this site?
16 MR. MILLER: Off the top of my head,
17 I don't know, sir. Our intent is to tap into the
18 three-phase line that runs up the town -- not the
19 interstate, the other road.
20 MR. DEAN: County road.
21 MR. MILLER: County road, thank you.
22 MR. RICKARD: I believe, when we got
23 feedback on the utility on our submission, they

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1 told us it was about a mile and a half to the
2 substation, which was close enough for us.
3 MR. DEAN: On a project that's this
4 rural, will be you working with Cornbelt Electric
5 or is this Ameren or do you know?
6 MR. RICKARD: This is Ameren
7 territory.
8 MR. DEAN: Okay. Thank you.
9 MR. BANGERT: So the front half of
10 the property, because there's already 2-megawatt,
11 will that front half then continue to be farmed?
12 MR. RICKARD: Yes. It will be up to
13 the landowner as to what he wants to continue to do
14 with the rest of the property. He did request that
15 we leave him as much frontage on the County road as
16 possible. But I would assume that he'd continue to
17 allow it to be farmed.
18 MR. BANGERT: So the vegetative
19 buffers, how far will that extend to the north
20 then?
21 MR. MILLER: I don't see a call for
22 vegetative buffers on this plan.
23 MR. BANGERT: Well, what I'm saying

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1 is the vegetation that you plant underneath the
2 solar panels, it'll extend towards the farmland.
3 What will be the buffer from the farmland?
4 MR. RICKARD: I see. So we would
5 revegetate all the disturbed areas. So potentially
6 that could mean revegetating everything up and to
7 the fence line, depending on how much gets
8 disturbed during construction.
9 MR. BANGERT: Thank you.
10 MR. FINNIGAN: Any other questions?
11 Staff? Would anyone in the audience have questions
12 for this applicant? Would any -- please come
13 forward, if you do.
14 MS. KINGDON: No. I just want to --
15 MR. FINNIGAN: You have to come
16 forward to get on the record.
17 MS. KINGDON: I just wondered how
18 they choose the sites.
19 MR. FINNIGAN: Could you sit there
20 and then press the little button on the right. You
21 got to state your name and address first.
22 MS. KINGDON: Wilha Kingdon from
23 Gridley, Illinois. I just wanted to know how you

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1 choose your sites.
2 MR. RICKARD: So primarily we look
3 for land that is suitable for the use. That
4 generally means land that is flat without having
5 too much of a slope or any other characteristics
6 that will make it -- that would hinder our ability
7 to generate solar power. We look for land that is
8 not close to significant residential developments
9 and we look for land that is close to three-phase
10 power so we can have close access to the power
11 grid. And we also look for land that -- where the
12 zoning allows the use that we're proposing.
13 MS. KINGDON: Thank you.
14 MR. FINNIGAN: We need to have your
15 address, if you could. Thank you.
16 MS. KINGDON: It's 9570 North 00 East
17 Road, Gridley, 61744.
18 MR. DICK: Could you repeat your
19 name, please?
20 MS. KINGDON: Wilha, W-I-L-H-A,
21 Kingdon, K-I-N-G-D-O-N.
22 MR. DICK: Thank you.
23 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Any other

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1 questions from the audience? Would anyone in the
2 audience want to give testimony on this case? Come
3 forward. You know the process.
4 MR. MATEJKA: Yes, sir. Mike
5 Matejka, M-A-T-E-J-K-A. 800 North School Street in
6 Normal, 61761. And I'm just very proud that McLean
7 County is becoming a center for alternative energy.
8 You need to swear?
9 MR. FINNIGAN: Yeah. Sorry, I'm
10 rusty at this.
11 MIKE MATEJKA,
12 The witness, having been first duly
13 sworn upon his oath, testified as follows:
14 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. You can go
15 ahead.
16 MR. MATEJKA: Thank you. Very proud
17 that McLean County is becoming a center for wind
18 and solar and other energy formats. Part of these
19 things is economic development for local people.
20 And for all three programs here tonight, I am
21 testifying to highly encourage them to hire the
22 local skill trades to do the work and not to import
23 people from outside this county to do the

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1 construction work. With changes in the economy in
2 this country it's often pointed to that green jobs
3 are a great alternative but they're not a great
4 alternative if people are not employed. So really
5 would love to see local skilled people. And as a
6 member of the Laborer's Union, I'd like to see our
7 folks given the opportunity to perform work on this
8 project and all the solar projects in our
9 community. Thanks.

10 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Anyone
11 else want to give testimony on this case? Seeing
12 none, do you have a closing statement?

13 MR. RICKARD: None other than thank
14 you for all of your time and consideration.

15 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. This part of
16 the hearing is closed and we can deliberate on the
17 case. You want to talk about anything before we go
18 to standards? Moving right to the standards.
19 Standard 1. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six.
20 Seven.

21 MS. TURNER: I move that we approve
22 Case Number SU-18-28 and its stated stipulations.
23 MR. DEAN: I'll second that.

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1 MR. FINNIGAN: We have a motion by
2 Turner, a second by Dean. Can we have a roll call
3 vote?

4 MR. DICK: Bangert.
5 MR. BANGERT: Yes.
6 MR. DICK: Kuritz.
7 MR. KURITZ: Yes.
8 MR. DICK: Dean.
9 MR. DEAN: Yes.
10 MR. DICK: Turner.
11 MS. TURNER: Yes.
12 MR. DICK: Finnigan.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.
14 MR. DICK: Carlton.
15 MS. CARLTON: Yes.
16 MR. DICK: Taylor.
17 MS. TAYLOR: Yes.
18 MR. FINNIGAN: I think it passed.
19 Phil's got the rest of it.
20 MR. DICK: Goes to the County Board
21 third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. Unless
22 it's pulled off the consent agenda, it will be on
23 the consent agenda and voted with a number of other

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1 cases. And you can either attend or I'll let you
2 know the next morning if you want to call me and
3 I'll send you a letter with the results.

4 MR. RICKARD: Thank you.
5 MR. FINNIGAN: I don't think you need
6 to go anywhere.
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1 MR. FINNIGAN: Will the secretary
2 call the next case.
3 MR. DICK: This is Case Number
4 SU-18-29, an application of ASD McLean Illinois
5 Solar V, LLC by Amp Solar Development, Incorporated
6 for special use to allow solar power generating
7 facility in the Agriculture District on property in
8 the southwest quarter of Section 1, Township 26
9 North, Range 3 East of the third principal meridian
10 and located in Gridley Township immediately
11 northeast of the intersection of U.S. Route 24 and
12 2280 East Road.
13 Public notice of this hearing was
14 published in the Pantagraph on December 15, 2018 as
15 provided by law. All the other required
16 notifications have been made and the applicant has
17 paid the publication cost.
18 As the first exhibit, I'd like to
19 introduce the application which I think you all
20 have received a copy of it so I will not pass. And
21 I have the plat maps showing where this property is
22 located in Gridley Township. And zoning map
23 showing where this property is located to the east

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1 of Gridley, north of U.S. Route 24. There's a
2 corner of this property has actually some M-2
3 Zoning on it. So otherwise -- but M-2 Zoning is
4 also allowed -- allows solar power generating
5 facilities by special use.

6 And as an attachment, I have a site
7 plan, which was also included with your application
8 so I won't pass that at this time. And a land
9 evaluation and site assessment that has a score
10 from the Soil and Water Conservation District and a
11 LESA report that was completed by me which I will
12 pass. There's an EcoCAT report from Illinois
13 Department of Natural Resources that was submitted
14 with the application and the consultation was
15 terminated, there were no endangered species found
16 on the property. But since it was part of the
17 application, I won't pass that either. And a
18 communication from the County Health Department
19 indicating that they have no issues with this
20 special use being applied for on this property.

21 And this is -- access to the public
22 road is going to be from Gridley Township so the
23 Gridley Township Road Commissioner was -- I spoke

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1 with him by phone and then he spoke with the
2 applicant by phone and indicating that he is in
3 general agreement with the location but he will
4 still have to issue a building permit, and that's a
5 communication that is a result of that.

6 This is the -- Communication Number 5
7 has to do with the historic preservation. And they
8 did a geographic information research on it and
9 didn't find any historic features.

10 And I'll deliver some photos of the
11 property at this time. As you can see, this is
12 east of Gridley on the north side of Route 24. The
13 area to the east there is Meadows. And this is the
14 property here. There was a special use to
15 establish these grain bins in a previous zoning
16 case. And the property would be accessed from this
17 north/south road to the west outlined in red. And
18 that's the old TP&W Railroad tracks along which is
19 the three-phase power line that they're going to be
20 connecting to.

21 And it was foggy that day too, it was
22 the same day. It was foggier out by Gridley than
23 it was in Dale Township. This is along the

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1 township road there facing south and those are the
2 grain storage facilities on the left there. And
3 this is toward the north, toward the TP&W railroad
4 tracks that you can't hardly see and the subject
5 property is to the right. And this is facing
6 across the subject property. And there is, as you
7 can see, the grain bin there. And this is the TP&W
8 tracks that are just to the north of the site. And
9 if you can look to the left you'll see the
10 three-phase power line that they're going to be
11 connecting to. You can see the three-phase line
12 there too. And this is the township road facing
13 north. And the three-phase line. And the blowup
14 of the aerial map.

15 I'll deliver the staff report at this
16 time. The topography is relatively flat, the
17 drainage is to the west, vegetation is crop
18 production. It is surrounded by the Agriculture
19 District although part of this property is in the
20 M-2 District and most of it though is in the
21 Agriculture District. It was rezoned to the M-2
22 District years ago because they thought they were
23 going to put an asphalt plant and they never did

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1 and so it's still got that zoning. That's why that
2 property has that zoning. The surrounding land use
3 is crop production on all sides.

4 The land evaluation and site
5 assessment has a site score of 82.1 out of 100 and
6 a site assessment score of 169 out of 200. Total
7 LESA review score is 251.1 points out of 300. A
8 score of 230 points and above means that the
9 property is of very high value for agricultural
10 land protection.

11 The analysis of the seven standards
12 is as follows:

13 One. The proposed special use will
14 not be detrimental to or endanger the health,
15 safety, morals, comfort, or welfare of the public.
16 And this standard is met. The applicant proposes
17 to establish a 2-megawatt solar power generating
18 facility on this property, which will meet all the
19 County setback requirements and use standards for a
20 solar power generating facility.

21 The application indicates that this
22 facility will contain rows of Photovoltaic cell
23 panels mounted on posts set in the ground. These

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1 rows of panels are referred to as solar arrays.
2 The rest of these standards are very
3 similar to, or identical to, the other case that I
4 just read so I won't read them all into the record
5 but I'll refer to them as I introduced it before.
6 I will review Standard Number 7, that
7 the proposed use, in all other respects, conforms
8 to the applicable regulations of the Agriculture
9 District. And this standard is met. And this has
10 to do with the Land Evaluation and site assessment
11 which is similar as the last report as I indicated.
12 In conclusion, staff recommends that
13 this application meets all the standards set forth
14 in Article VIII, Section 350-56, Standards for
15 Special Use Permits, provided compliance with the
16 following stipulations:
17 One. An entrance permit shall be
18 obtained from the Gridley Township Road
19 Commissioner before a construction permit is
20 issued.
21 Two. The applicant shall provide
22 certified plans for storm water detention/retention
23 before a construction permit is issued.

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1 Three. The applicant shall complete
2 consultation with the Illinois Historic
3 Preservation Agency before a construction permit is
4 issued.
5 Four. The applicant shall have all
6 field tile damage in the construction process
7 repaired by a competent contractor, with experience
8 in such repair, during the life of the solar farm.
9 Five. The solar panels shall be
10 installed with an anti-reflective coating.
11 Six. Ground cover that encourages
12 pollination that is recommended by the McLean
13 County Soil and Water Conservation District needs
14 to be installed.
15 Seven. A contact person for the
16 applicant will need to be kept on file with the
17 Department of Building and Zoning for
18 issues/complaints on completion of the facility.
19 And eight. Development shall follow
20 the plans and documents submitted with the
21 application and with Zoning Regulations including
22 Article VI, Section 350-43.00(3), which are the Use
23 Standards for a solar power generating facility and

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1 the Zoning Ordinance.
2 That concludes my report.
3 MR. FINNIGAN: We're going to
4 consider you all three are sworn in. So if you
5 want to present your case, you can go ahead.
6 MR. RICKARD: Thank you. In terms of
7 this project, the presentation we have, all of the
8 details prior to the project slide will remain the
9 same identical in terms of, you know, equipment and
10 configuration and use and all those other
11 characteristics. In the interest of time, I won't
12 go through them all again unless anybody would like
13 to refer to a particular slide. I would -- if we
14 could go to the next slide, please. Thank you.
15 You'll see here that we will be
16 taking access off of the road to the west, which
17 should reduce the impact of any traffic onto 3100
18 North Road. And we've also located the electrical
19 equipment pad as far away from any of the abutting
20 residences, any nearby residences that we could.
21 And those are the two measures that we've taken
22 here to mitigate any possible impacts to people in
23 the local area. Otherwise, all features and

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1 equipment are the same as previously presented.
2 I'd be happy to answer any questions
3 the Board may have.
4 MR. DEAN: So I believe this corner
5 I'm looking at here in the south, it would be the
6 southeastern corner?
7 MR. RICKARD: Yes, sir.
8 MR. DEAN: And that's vacated, it
9 does not have solar panels on it for what reason?
10 MR. MILLER: I'm sorry. The corner
11 in the southwest?
12 MR. DEAN: You're correct.
13 MR. MILLER: Yes, sir. That doesn't
14 have solar panels. We didn't want to build right
15 up to the grain bins in case of shading and we also
16 wanted to give a wide berth to any sort of
17 operations that may occur there in the future.
18 MR. DEAN: Will that area continue to
19 be cropped, do you think, is that the plan?
20 MR. RICKARD: That would be up to the
21 landowner. That's not yet part of our lease
22 agreement.
23 MR. DEAN: Okay. Thank you.

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1 MR. FINNIGAN: We saw the three-phase
2 line there. But where's the substation compared to
3 this project?
4 MR. RICKARD: I'm not sure exactly
5 where it's located. But I know again when Ameren
6 utility gave us feedback on this we were less than
7 two miles from the substation which is a good
8 distance. And the utilities did not indicate that
9 we would need to make major equipment upgrades
10 which means the line is pretty well suited to bear
11 the addition of a solar panel.
12 MR. FINNIGAN: So in other words, the
13 substation would have to be within two miles to
14 make this work for you?
15 MR. RICKARD: No, sir. It depends on
16 -- if I have to upgrade, let's say, five miles of
17 three-phase and then install extra equipment at the
18 substation that may be a cost burden that would be
19 too big for this project. For this particular
20 site, we're close enough to the substation, the
21 line is robust and good enough to handle it, and
22 the substation itself can handle the extra power
23 pretty easily. So it's on a case by case basis.

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1 MR. FINNIGAN: Does it have to go
2 through a substation?
3 MR. RICKARD: Yes.
4 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. Thanks. Any
5 other questions?
6 MR. DEAN: So what kind of power are
7 you putting out? Are you putting out 240/480 or is
8 it bigger than that? Do those terms mean anything
9 to you?
10 MR. MILLER: So the power's collected
11 direct current, 1,000 volts, 1,500 volts. It's
12 converted to AC power, typically 240/480, those
13 string inverters we showed you earlier, and then
14 it's stepped up. Thank you. Then it's stepped up
15 to grid voltage. In this case I believe it's
16 13,000 KV, somewhere around there.
17 MR. RICKARD: Yeah, I believe that's
18 right.
19 MR. DEAN: Okay. Thank you.
20 MR. FINNIGAN: Any other questions?
21 Staff have questions?
22 MR. DICK: No.
23 MR. FINNIGAN: Would anyone in the

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1 audience have questions of this witness? Need to
2 state your name and address, please.
3 MR. RINGGER: Jamin Ringger.
4 J-A-M-I-N. Ringger is R-I-N-G-G-E-R. Address is
5 19355 East 3000 North, Gridley, Illinois, 61744.
6 The question is how much heat is generated off of
7 these? We've got a hog farm just a quarter a mile
8 away. If we've got a west wind that's heading that
9 direction is it going to raise the temperature at
10 all, even a degree or two?
11 MR. RICKARD: I wouldn't expect it to
12 raise the ambient temperature in the area
13 significantly at all. Geoff, do you have any other
14 detail?
15 MR. MILLER: I don't. I concur.
16 Most of the heat is in the conversion, step up
17 voltage.
18 MR. RINGGER: Okay.
19 MR. MILLER: And it's made to operate
20 at these temperatures, if that's your concern. But
21 it also cools with the air around it and that's how
22 it dissipates heat. But nothing that would raise
23 the temperature in the area let alone your

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1 property --
2 MR. RINGGER: Okay.
3 MR. MILLER: -- significantly, a
4 degree or more.
5 MR. RINGGER: Okay. Got another
6 question too. Is there -- if one of these
7 batteries should fail, I mean if whatever materials
8 are in these batteries, is there any way to capture
9 what's in them so it doesn't contaminate the
10 ground?
11 MR. RICKARD: While we do use
12 batteries in a lot of our solar installations we're
13 not proposing them for this one. This is just a
14 straight solar Photovoltaic installation. So you'd
15 just have the solar panels, the tracking system,
16 and the inverters as well as the utility
17 transformer. So there are no batteries on this
18 site. However, the answer is yes, if there are
19 batteries on site, there are methods to contain,
20 you know, the contents if there's a failure.
21 MR. RINGGER: Great. Okay. Sounds
22 good. Thank you.
23 MR. FINNIGAN: Any other questions

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1 from the audience? Would anyone in the audience
2 like to give testimony in this case? Seeing none,
3 you want to make a closing statement?
4 MR. RICKARD: No further comments
5 from us at this time. Thank you.
6 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. This part of
7 the hearing is closed. We can deliberate on the
8 case, presuming there's no discussion. If there
9 is, we can talk about it.
10 MR. DEAN: The question that I had
11 was if the area is vacated -- it appears to me that
12 there is a residence. What is that further
13 southwest of that intersection? Can you help me
14 with that, Phil. Is there a residence there?
15 MR. DICK: Could you -- are you
16 talking about that little vacated area right in the
17 corner?
18 MR. DEAN: Yes. And then just
19 catty-corner from that, what is that structure? It
20 appears to be a residence. That's the one I'm
21 referring to right -- catty-corner from the grain
22 bin. Is that a residence, is it a farming setup,
23 what is that?

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1 MR. RINGGER: There is a house there.
2 MR. DEAN: There's a home there?
3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. There's
4 an organic farm straight south.
5 MR. DEAN: Okay. Thank you. That's
6 all my questions. Thanks.
7 MR. FINNIGAN: Ready to go through
8 the standards then? All right. Standard 1. Two.
9 Three. Four. Five. Six. Seven.
10 MS. TURNER: I move that we approve
11 Case Number SU-18-30 (sic) with the stated
12 stipulations.
13 MR. KURITZ: I second that.
14 MR. FINNIGAN: We have a motion by
15 Kuritz, a second -- a motion by Turner, second by
16 Kuritz. Can we have a roll call vote.
17 MR. DICK: Bangert.
18 MR. BANGERT: Yes.
19 MR. DICK: Kuritz.
20 MR. KURITZ: Yes.
21 MR. DICK: Dean.
22 MR. DEAN: Yes.
23 MR. DICK: Turner.

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1 MS. TURNER: Yes. I think I
2 misstated that case number, it should be SU-18-29.
3 MR. DICK: Finnigan.
4 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.
5 MR. DICK: Carlton.
6 MS. CARLTON: Yes.
7 MR. DICK: Taylor.
8 MS. TAYLOR: Yes.
9 MR. DICK: Goes to the County Board
10 third Tuesday of this month at 5:30 p.m. And you
11 can call our offices the next day in the morning or
12 I'll e-mail you the results in a letter the
13 following day.
14 MR. RICKARD: Thank you.
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1 MR. FINNIGAN: Will the secretary
2 call the next case, SU-18-30.
3 MR. DICK: This is Case Number
4 SU-18-30, application of ASD McLean Illinois Solar
5 VI, LLC by Amp Solar Development, Incorporated for
6 a special use to allow solar power generating
7 facility in the Agriculture District on property in
8 the southeast quarter of Section 9, Township 26
9 North, Range 3 East of the third principal meridian
10 located in Gridley Township immediately northeast
11 of the intersection of 3000 North Road and 2025
12 East Road.
13 Public notice of this hearing was
14 published in the Pantagraph on December 18th -- 15,
15 excuse me, December 15, 2018 as provided by law.
16 All the other required notifications have been made
17 and the applicant has paid the publication cost.
18 I won't pass the application since I
19 sent it out. But I will pass a plat map showing
20 where this property is located in Gridley Township
21 a little less than a mile south of the Village of
22 Gridley.
23 And the zoning map showing that this

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1 property is in the Agriculture District outlined in
2 red here. And I won't pass -- oh, no. I do have.
3 I have modified site plans from your application.
4 These are slightly different and I'll pass them,
5 each take one. And the basic difference between
6 what was provided earlier and what we have here is
7 these mustard points and these storage areas right
8 here, they're slightly modified in this plan.
9 Otherwise it's identical to what was in the
10 application.
11 And I have a LESA soil report that I
12 will pass and an EcoCAT completed by Illinois
13 Department of Natural Resources and consultation is
14 terminated, there are no endangered species on the
15 property. Oh, yeah, I'm going to keep that because
16 you each have one of those. And a communication
17 from the County Health Department indicating
18 they're okay with the application of the special
19 use. There's a communication from the Historic
20 Preservation Agency. This was actually in your
21 application too so I won't pass it. And I will
22 deliver -- I'll show you the aerial photos.
23 This is facing east on the township

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1 road at the intersection there. And this is facing
2 west on the road -- this is the intersection where
3 the county highway actually turns -- if you go past
4 this stop sign, past the county highway, and if you
5 go to the right that's the county highway that goes
6 to Gridley. We're south of Gridley. And that's
7 what the sign looks like at that intersection. And
8 this is facing north toward the Village of Gridley,
9 the subject property is on your right. And facing
10 the other direction, south. And this is the corner
11 facing the subject property at the corner there
12 where the solar farm is proposed to be located.
13 Now we're up toward the north end of
14 the property and we're facing the field at the
15 north end of the subject property. And this is the
16 farm field across the way. And there is a house
17 across the street to the -- the subject property is
18 to the left, or to the east, and there is a farm
19 dwelling, or a house and some farm buildings to the
20 west. And that's the house that's located there.
21 And this is the subject property facing east at the
22 north end of the property. And the aerial photo of
23 the property.

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1 The topography is relatively flat.
2 The vegetation on the property is crop production.
3 The public road, Road 2025 East, is a county
4 highway 22.1 feet in width and 3000 North Road is
5 an oil and chip road 21.5 feet in width.
6 The surrounding zoning is Agriculture
7 District on all sides. The surrounding land use to
8 the north, south, and east is crop production, to
9 the west is crop production and a single-family
10 residence with farm buildings.
11 The Land Evaluation and Site
12 Assessment report has a soil score of 98.1 out of
13 100 and a site assessment score of 168 out of 200
14 giving it a total score of 266.1 points out of a
15 maximum of 300 points. The LESA report indicates
16 that a total score of 230 points and above means
17 that the property is of very high value for
18 agricultural land protection.
19 And this one is proposed -- the
20 standards as they apply to this request is as
21 follows:
22 The first one is the proposed special
23 use will not be detrimental or endanger the health,

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1 safety, morals, comfort, or welfare of the public
2 and this standard is met. The applicant proposes
3 to establish two co-located 2-megawatt solar power
4 generating facilities on this property, which will
5 meet all the County setback requirements and use
6 standards for a solar power generating facility.
7 The application indicates that this
8 facility will contain rows of Photovoltaic cell
9 panels mounted on posts set in the ground and these
10 rows of panels are referred to as solar arrays.
11 Amp Solar Development will mount the solar arrays
12 on tracking systems, which allow them to follow the
13 sun throughout the day. The solar arrays will be
14 designed with anti-reflective coating.
15 They did an EcoCAT on the property
16 and it indicates that there's no record of
17 State-listed threatened or endangered species,
18 Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites, dedicated
19 Illinois Nature Preserves, or registered Land and
20 Water Reserves in the vicinity of the project and
21 that the consultation is terminated.
22 A decommissioning plan that includes
23 an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement with

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1 the Illinois Department of Agriculture and
2 financial assurance acceptable to the County need
3 to be provided.
4 And the applicant will provide a
5 contact person to be kept on file with the
6 Department of Building and Zoning.
7 And the applicant indicates that a
8 one-mile search from the site was conducted using
9 the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
10 Geographic Information System. It did find two
11 historic sites found within one mile of the site
12 and both are in the Village of Gridley and they are
13 more than three-quarters of a mile from the subject
14 property.
15 And the other Standards 2 through 7
16 are similar to my last report so I won't read
17 through them. I will however read the
18 stipulations, which are as follows:
19 An entrance permit shall be obtained
20 from the County Engineer before a construction
21 permit is issued.
22 The applicant shall provide certified
23 plans for storm water detention before a

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1 construction permit is issued.
2 Three. The applicant shall complete
3 consultation with Illinois Historic Preservation
4 Agency before a construction permit is issued.
5 Four. The applicant shall have all
6 field tile damaged in the construction process
7 repaired by a competent contractor, with experience
8 in such repairs, during the life of the solar farm.
9 And 5. The solar panels shall be
10 installed with an anti-reflective coating.
11 Six. Ground cover that encourages
12 pollination that is recommended by the McLean
13 County Soil and Water Conservation District needs
14 to be installed.
15 Seven. A contact person for the
16 applicant will need to be kept on file with the
17 Department of Building and Zoning for issues and
18 complaints upon completion of the facility.
19 Eight. Development shall follow the
20 plans and documents submitted with the application
21 and with Zoning Regulations including Article VI,
22 Section 350-43.00(3), and these are the Use
23 Standards for a solar power generating facility.

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1 That concludes my report.
2 MR. FINNIGAN: You boys are still
3 sworn in.
4 MR. RICKARD: Yes.
5 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. Present your
6 case.
7 MR. RICKARD: Yes, sir. In terms of
8 -- again, in terms of all of the equipment, general
9 orientation, and all of the other features of the
10 project, those remain unchanged from the previous
11 slides in our presentation.
12 As regards this particular project, I
13 would just point out a couple of features. We have
14 proposed some vegetative screening on the northwest
15 side and the -- on the northwest corner to screen
16 the property from the residence that's immediately
17 adjacent across the street. And we've also located
18 the equipment pad more than a thousand feet away
19 from either of the residences that are nearby, or
20 closest to the site, in order to mitigate any
21 potential impacts from -- to those residences.
22 Like I said, everything would remain
23 the same as previously presented and I would be

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1 happy to answer any questions the Board may have.
2 MR. FINNIGAN: Questions?
3 MR. BANGERT: Can you give us a
4 little bit more description of the vegetative
5 screen you're proposing?
6 MR. RICKARD: Sure. So we're
7 proposing some Evergreen trees. We can plant them
8 as directed by the County. However -- you know, in
9 terms of the exact species they would prefer to
10 see. But we would plant them I would say probably
11 every 10 or 15 feet so that they would grow in
12 together and eventually provide a pretty
13 significant screening barrier.
14 MR. BANGERT: So the determination of
15 species you said has to be coordinated with the
16 County?
17 MR. MILLER: We can propose species,
18 we can have a landscape architect propose a species
19 but if the County has a preference as to which
20 species should be planted we would happily take
21 direction from the County.
22 MR. BANGERT: Okay. Thank you.
23 MR. DEAN: Many times if you're after

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1 adequate screening in an effective manner you'll
2 have two rows.
3 MR. RICKARD: Yes. That is the case.
4 We'd be happy to accept that as a condition of
5 approval.
6 MR. DEAN: Okay. I was just seeing
7 the one row here and thinking maybe that was it.
8 That's great. Thank you. I do have a question on
9 the anti-reflective properties of the solar cells
10 themselves. Is that an industry standard item or
11 is this a special --
12 MR. RICKARD: I would say it's
13 industry standard. I mean, you can get, I would
14 say, lower quality solar modules that are less --
15 that would be more reflective but that's
16 counter-productive. The purpose is to absorb as
17 much sunlight as possible and not to reflect it
18 back up into the air. So yeah, the anti-reflective
19 design and the coating on the modules is industry
20 standard.
21 MR. DEAN: That's the nature of the
22 product that you're trying to capture, right?
23 MR. RICKARD: That's correct.

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1 MR. DEAN: Okay.
2 MS. TURNER: I assume with the
3 screen, you don't have any problems with the
4 positioning of your solar panels then, no worries
5 of shading with everything where it is there?
6 MR. RICKARD: No. With the location
7 of it, the trees are on the -- partially on the
8 north side and then also on the northwest side. So
9 obviously trees on the north side will have zero
10 shading impact and if there is any shading from
11 those trees on the west side it would be very
12 minimal.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: You're not proposing
14 the trees for noise? Or why even put the trees
15 there, just to keep a barrier from the house?
16 MR. RICKARD: Yeah. Just as a
17 courtesy to the -- to our neighbors there so that
18 they can look at trees.
19 MR. FINNIGAN: Trees instead of solar
20 panels?
21 MR. RICKARD: Yeah. Directly across
22 from their driveway, yes.
23 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. Thank you.

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1 MR. RICKARD: We designed it to
2 follow along to the -- to where their property line
3 ends, so their residential area there.
4 MR. FINNIGAN: Any other questions?
5 Any questions from staff?
6 MR. DICK: Would you be amenable to
7 Evergreen ten foot on center, two rows that are
8 alternately placed?
9 MR. RICKARD: In terms of sort of
10 staggered?
11 MR. DICK: Yes.
12 MR. RICKARD: So there would be
13 essentially a tree every five feet?
14 MR. DICK: Yeah.
15 MR. RICKARD: Yeah. That would be
16 fine.
17 MR. DICK: And how tall would they be
18 when they were planted?
19 MR. RICKARD: I think at least five
20 feet when planted.
21 MR. DICK: Okay.
22 MR. FINNIGAN: I wonder if we ought
23 to have Soil and Water talk about that because that

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1 might be too close. They need room to grow out.
2 MS. TURNER: They're staggered.
3 MR. DEAN: That's my thought too.
4 You probably need to ask a professional opinion on
5 that. Depends on the variety. If you plant a big
6 tree and you plant them ten foot on center, that's
7 too close.
8 MR. FINNIGAN: It defeats the purpose
9 later on. I mean, I don't want to testify. But
10 they will die.
11 MR. BANGERT: Just consult NRCS on
12 this is what you're saying?
13 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. Any questions
14 from the audience for this witness? Please come
15 forward. Would you state your name and address for
16 the record.
17 MR. KINGDON: My name is Wesley
18 Kingdon. W-E-S-L-E-Y. Kingdon, K-I-N-G-D-O-N.
19 The address is 9570 North 00 East Road. And that's
20 in Gridley.
21 MR. FINNIGAN: And this is for
22 questions only at this time. Question?
23 MR. KINGDON: Yeah. This is -- well,

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1 it's more -- it's not on the solar, it's just more
2 -- we own the property right across the road, the
3 4.8 acres where the buildings are. And our taxes
4 on it last year was \$4,825.14, so it's pretty good
5 taxes, probably three times as much as the property
6 across the road.

7 But I guess I farm -- well, since
8 I've been 15, I'm 73 now, it's all been redundant,
9 watch corn and beans grow. So I guess we like to
10 do that, we like to watch cornfields and stuff like
11 that.

12 But I guess what gets me more than
13 anything on this particular farm, solar farm -- and
14 I'm not against solar, it's got to be put the right
15 place, don't get me wrong. But I think this farm
16 here's got like 140 --

17 MR. FINNIGAN: We kind of have to get
18 to a question or else it'll be testimony, we got to
19 put you under oath.

20 MR. KINGDON: Oh, okay.

21 MR. FINNIGAN: You'll have to come
22 back for that.

23 MR. KINGDON: Yeah. Why don't --

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1 yeah. It's probably more -- I don't have no
2 questions really.

3 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. We're asking
4 for questions at this point. You can come back.

5 MR. KINGDON: Okay.

6 MR. FINNIGAN: I think somebody else
7 had a question.

8 MR. KINGDON: Oh, okay. Sure. Sorry
9 about that.

10 MR. FINNIGAN: That's all right. Was
11 there a question on this side?

12 MR. SCHIELER: Glenn Schieler,
13 G-L-E-N-N, Schieler, S-C-H-I-E-L-E-R. 210 South
14 Center Street, Gridley, Illinois. My question -- I
15 have a few. But have you done a study on the
16 effect of the property values on the homes? 'Cause
17 on the other -- all the other ones there's not this
18 many houses that are directly in line with this
19 project. Me families lived there, we live to the
20 north, we've lived there for over 70 years. And
21 have you done any impact studies on property
22 values?

23 MR. RICKARD: We have not done an

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1 impact study on this particular piece of property.
2 However, there have been studies that have been
3 done previously that have shown no real drop in
4 property values for adjoining properties to solar
5 projects like this. There was -- I believe there
6 was a study submitted to this Board earlier this
7 year under testimony for a similar project. Which
8 if you wanted to you could probably dig up from the
9 County records.

10 MR. SCHIELER: Was that study done
11 private or who paid for it? Was it an independent
12 or --

13 MR. RICKARD: I am not -- I'm not
14 certain as to the independence of the person doing
15 the study. But I believe it was done by a
16 professional real estate evaluator.

17 MR. SCHIELER: So would you be
18 willing to sign a document if anyone in our area
19 would sell their house that if there was a property
20 value decrease that you would take care of the
21 difference on that?

22 MR. RICKARD: Property value
23 decreases can be due to a number of different

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1 factors. I don't know if there will be a reliable
2 mechanism to demonstrate the impact of one
3 particular aspect and apportioning any such drop in
4 values. So I would not be prepared to sign that
5 particular document.

6 MR. SCHIELER: Okay. So then I guess
7 the question would be how are we supposed to look
8 at that when we -- you know, we've spent our whole
9 life building something here and you guys want to
10 come in and you don't live around here, how's that
11 -- how are we supposed to accept that? How are we
12 supposed to accept that -- we have a young couple
13 that just bought a house, they're not even done
14 signing for it, and their property values are
15 probably going to go in a half. So if they would
16 decide to sell, young couples move, they outgrow
17 homes. I think in this particular case I think we
18 need to have a moratorium and we need to do some
19 studies and not just studies that maybe you provide
20 but that's an independent that has a neutral party.

21 We're a mile -- less than a mile from
22 Gridley, we're not out in the middle of the
23 country, we've got over seven homes, probably more

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1 than that if you figure within -- you know, put a
2 circle with a mile around it and we're already
3 getting windmills. So I guess I don't know why
4 we're being targeted so much right there. But I
5 think that's something --
6 MR. FINNIGAN: That's kind of getting
7 into testimony. You can come back.
8 MR. SCHIELER: It's kind of a
9 question though.
10 MR. FINNIGAN: Well, let's get to the
11 question.
12 MR. SCHIELER: And also in McLean
13 County, I mean, the -- aren't we supposed to
14 provide or keep our good PI ground in production?
15 I mean, I think the Farm Bureau supports that. I
16 mean, we've got a field here that's 142 PI. So
17 don't you go to more brownfield sites or sites that
18 are poorer in that case? I mean, you're taking
19 ground out of production that probably will never
20 be back in production.
21 MR. RICKARD: Well, to answer your
22 question about brownfield sites. Solar can be
23 applied to brownfield sites. Obviously those are

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1 pretty limited, there's only a limited number of
2 those. So inevitably solar development spills out
3 into farmland like this.
4 I didn't really hear a question on
5 any other topic but I will say that the way I
6 review this is once this is decommissioned you
7 would essentially have farmland that has been left
8 fallow for a significant period of time and I would
9 expect it to be as much, if not more, productive
10 once the solar use has been decommissioned.
11 MR. SCHIELER: How are you going to
12 keep the vegetation down? I mean, because every
13 time I try to grow something I get weeds if I don't
14 spray it. And if you spray it too much you're
15 going to ruin it. I mean, if you spray every year
16 with the same chemical it's not going to be good.
17 MR. RICKARD: We don't spray. We
18 would mow the vegetation and keep it down to
19 prevent it from shading the solar panels and to
20 obviously prevent the growth and spread of any sort
21 of nuisance, weeds, that sort of thing. But
22 generally we don't spray unless the County or
23 another authority requires us to do so for a

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1 specific invasive species or product or plant or
2 something like that.
3 MR. SCHIELER: So are your plans to
4 keep this in the company or do they usually just
5 sell after a few years to a different company?
6 MR. RICKARD: A lot of solar
7 companies do sell these projects almost as soon as
8 -- almost before -- even before they're built. And
9 we are a company that does acquire projects from
10 other developments too. However, because we are a
11 company that acquires we have the ability to hold
12 these projects long term. So it's not our business
13 model to flip these projects to somebody else. The
14 idea is is that we come in and, you know, we're the
15 ones to deliver on the promises that we make at
16 this time.
17 MR. SCHIELER: So if the subsidized
18 part of this would go away then what happens to the
19 project?
20 MR. RICKARD: So solar is competitive
21 with other energy production sources at a slightly
22 larger scale than this without any subsidies. The
23 subsidies that are in place for this are really

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1 designed to allow individuals to take advantage of
2 solar power and to save money on their utility
3 bills as well. It allows them to save money up
4 front and over time as the plant continues to
5 produce power.
6 MR. SCHIELER: Okay. Thank you.
7 MR. HAYES: My name's Bill Hayes,
8 H-A-Y-E-S, Bill. 29198 North 2025 East Road,
9 Gridley.
10 MR. DICK: Did you say 2918?
11 MR. HAYES: 29198 East and then 2025.
12 My question is -- just a couple -- is when you
13 decommission, how many have you guys decommissioned
14 in the last five years?
15 MR. RICKARD: Very few solar farms
16 have been decommissioned in the last five years. I
17 don't recall that Amp has decommissioned any in the
18 last five years.
19 MR. HAYES: With Illinois, if they're
20 not here any more or you sell and the new company
21 -- there is some legalities with Illinois you've
22 got to sign some agreements. But if you sell to
23 somebody else, a third-party, and in 20 years the

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1 solar panels are no good, what's the guarantee that
2 they won't just sit there and be a bigger eye sore
3 than they are currently, you know, where we are
4 today on that? Where's the guarantees? Will it
5 land back on the County and the taxpayers?
6 MR. RICKARD: Does -- I can answer
7 that unless staff wants to. So we would provide a
8 surety to the County in the event that the solar
9 farm goes undecommissioned for a significant amount
10 of time and that would be based -- that would be
11 sufficient to cover the estimated costs. I believe
12 that would be part of the Agricultural Impact
13 Mitigation Agreement that we would have to sign
14 with the State of Illinois if not part of our
15 conditions of approval here with the County as
16 well. That's also written into the lease that we
17 have with the landowner. So there are multiple --
18 so layers, if you like, of obligations on our part.
19 As I've said before, the intention is
20 not to sell this project or any of our projects.
21 However, were we to do so, the obligations for
22 decommissioning would run along with the project
23 company which would be the mechanism of sale. So

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1 if we sold the project company, whoever becomes the
2 new owner of the project company would inherit all
3 of the obligations that run with the use.
4 MR. HAYES: If they're still in
5 business at that time, right?
6 MR. RICKARD: That's the purpose of
7 the surety.
8 MR. HAYES: On this particular one,
9 you're proposing batteries?
10 MR. RICKARD: No, sir.
11 MR. HAYES: No batteries on this?
12 MR. RICKARD: No, sir.
13 MR. HAYES: And then where is the
14 substation on this one? Because the last one you
15 didn't know where it was.
16 MR. RICKARD: Yeah. The substation
17 here I believe is again less than two miles away.
18 I don't have an exact pin on a map for you. But
19 it's fairly close.
20 MR. HAYES: Once this could be
21 decommissioned, there's no issues with the land?
22 MR. RICKARD: No, sir. There are no
23 hazardous chemicals used during operation. Like I

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1 said, our policy is not to spray for vegetation
2 management. We try and accomplish everything
3 through mowing only unless we're told to go spray
4 for something specific. We -- and everything else
5 can be pulled out. So the -- all of the fencing
6 can be pulled out, all of the posts can be pulled
7 out, any underground wiring will be pulled out, the
8 concrete would be taken away, and the gravel would
9 be taken off the land and we would reseed or leave
10 back to the landowner ready for agricultural
11 production.
12 MR. HAYES: And one of your
13 stipulations that you talked about when you're
14 looking for property is staying away from populated
15 areas. And being less than a mile -- Phil, I think
16 you said a mile from Gridley where there's roughly,
17 you know, a thousand people and then there's a lot
18 more residence, I live about a half mile further
19 down the road, how did you end up picking this?
20 Because it's pretty close to a lot of people. And
21 that road is traveled by hundreds, if not
22 thousands, every day, in the county to get to
23 Bloomington to work. I'm just curious how you

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1 picked that.
2 MR. RICKARD: So we -- like I said,
3 we look for land that is suitable for the
4 development. In terms of my comment about not
5 being right next to major residential developments,
6 I wouldn't say necessarily that this -- you know, I
7 feel like this piece of land is not next to a major
8 subdivision, there are homes in the area. But with
9 solar you end up having to thread the needle
10 between proximity to point of use, so where the
11 grid can handle extra power coming in, and being
12 far enough away from, you know, the town itself in
13 order for it not to impact too many people. So
14 it's -- I feel like it's sort of trying to find a
15 sweet spot between the two of, you know, where the
16 grid is or, you know, the utilities are able to
17 take the power and proximity to major population.
18 MR. HAYES: But you know there's a
19 substation within two miles of that point?
20 MR. RICKARD: Yeah. We did -- we got
21 a -- we got feedback from the utility telling us
22 that distance, I believe it was less than two
23 miles.

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1 MR. HAYES: I was trying to think
2 where that might be at. I've lived there my whole
3 life. All right. That's all I have.
4 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Any other
5 questions? I think we got one more.
6 MR. MASTERS: Good evening. Brett
7 Masters, B-R-E-T-T, M-A-S-T-E-R-S. 20647 East at
8 3000 North Road, Gridley, Illinois, 61744. My
9 question is -- well, several questions. How much
10 research studies are there for actually for the
11 heat that is produced? Because earlier you said
12 that you weren't sure of how much heat was actually
13 graded off the solar panels. And if there is a
14 decent amount, because the winds are being blown
15 against all these homes, how much of that is going
16 to be affected? Because there's not a very large
17 amount of space between these houses. I mean,
18 there's -- they're relatively very close to this.
19 MR. RICKARD: I'm -- the solar panels
20 themselves are not heat generators. Like I said,
21 they're designed to be anti-reflective so if
22 they're not reflecting much light they're also not
23 reflecting too much heat. Any heat that's

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1 generated inside the solar panel itself would be a
2 function of current passing through the solar panel
3 itself and it's very low.
4 I stood right next to these things
5 and they don't get any hotter than you would expect
6 -- you know, they're not putting off a massive
7 amount of heat at all. I've never felt them
8 radiating any heat. The inverters themselves is
9 where you might find some extra heat to be
10 generated. Again, it's very minimal.
11 I have an inverter of a similar
12 design on the back of my house at home and I can't
13 tell it being any different in heat from the brick
14 wall that it's mounted on in the summer. In terms
15 of studies, I'm not aware of any. Geoff, are you
16 aware of any studies?
17 MR. MILLER: I'm not.
18 MR. MASTERS: My -- another question
19 I have. If there was any kind of a problem with
20 contamination to the soil or the surrounding area
21 is your company actually taking -- going to take
22 steps or measures to reverse any possible
23 contamination?

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1 MR. RICKARD: I would say it's highly
2 unlikely that you would see any soil contamination
3 during operations given that there are no hazardous
4 liquids or anything of that sort stored on-site.
5 Any potential for soil contamination may come
6 during construction if you have equipment that is
7 powered by diesel or something like that and then
8 the reporting and cleanup of that would be governed
9 by the building permit that would be -- we would
10 have to clean it up according to the County
11 specifications.
12 MR. MASTERS: All right. Thank you.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you.
14 MR. PARKER: My name is Ted Parker, I
15 live at 120 Hillcrest in Gridley. And this is more
16 of a question for the Board and just something to
17 consider. Obviously they've done due diligence and
18 these things are going to pop up and Illinois law
19 makes it that they're going to pop up all over the
20 place and our small communities are easy targets
21 for this kind of thing. But the way the crow flies
22 the north -- or the southeast corner of that is
23 about a mile from the closest windmill coming to

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1 town to where is there any consideration for single
2 entities or communities taking on a bigger share of
3 this coming our way than -- you know, since we
4 already have the windmills why do we pick this site
5 to have a solar and how do we -- is there any
6 consideration when you are deciding this that that
7 comes into play at all how much one community gets
8 to take on versus the rest of the county? That's
9 my only question.
10 MR. FINNIGAN: I don't have an answer
11 for you, to tell the truth.
12 MR. PARKER: Okay.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: But what I will tell
14 you is this, when we were doing windmill they tell
15 us to do solar.
16 MR. PARKER: They what?
17 MR. FINNIGAN: They tell us to do
18 solar, it's less invasive.
19 MR. PARKER: Those are kind of
20 parasitic and they'll be big trees forever. My
21 question was really concentrated on, you know,
22 having multiple things coming your way that you
23 can't seem to stop versus other areas that just

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1 seem to somehow escape the whole process. So even
2 if it isn't considered tonight for this particular
3 thing being how close together that those things
4 are maybe in the future. That's my only question.
5 Thank you.
6 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Was there
7 any other questions? If not, we can open it up for
8 testimony. So Mr. Kingdon, if you want to come
9 back up.
10 MR. KINGDON: Okay.
11 MR. FINNIGAN: I need to either swear
12 you in or affirm you. Which would you rather do?
13 MR. KINGDON: What?
14 MR. FINNIGAN: Would you rather be
15 sworn in or affirmed?
16 MR. KINGDON: Whatever works.
17 WESLEY KINGDON,
18 The witness, having been first duly
19 sworn upon his oath, testified as follows:
20 MR. FINNIGAN: State your name and
21 address for the record.
22 MR. KINGDON: Wesley Kingdon. 9570
23 North 00 East Road. And that's in Gridley, 61744.

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1 I already stated that we own property
2 right across the road from there. I will say on
3 that map there, we own straight up right where the
4 alley is, 4.8 some acres. We do mow clear down to
5 the corner with the lawn mower just like we mow the
6 yard. When we mow the house yard just mow clear to
7 the corner, around the corner, that's Route 29.
8 Like Mr. Hayes said, it's an awful
9 heavy traveled road. I mean, people travel through
10 there, everybody. And I was surprised Glenn
11 Schieler brought this up too 'cause I never talked
12 to him about it. But the PI on that farm is
13 awfully high. It's a good corn, soybean, good
14 grain farm like McLean County likes.
15 But my concern I guess is taking a
16 good piece of ground, farmland like this, out of
17 production 'cause in that area around Gridley we do
18 have a lot of young farmers trying to start
19 farming. And you want to farm a good farm really,
20 you want to farm one that -- well, that'll raise
21 good crops and everything. And I just hate to see
22 that kind of soil took out. I just wish they would
23 take some soil -- some lighter soil. I mean,

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1 something that's not quite that kind of concern.
2 There's a lot of light soils in the county, I'm
3 sure, and I know you can't build them by trees so,
4 I mean, that's out.
5 I talked to a guy by the name of
6 Howard Kruger, he's with TriGlobal, with the
7 windmills, he's a land manager, he acquires land to
8 get this up. He's actually from Minnesota but he's
9 working out of Texas. And he told me too, he says,
10 he's done some solar farms -- he really likes
11 windmills -- he's up by El Paso. But he says
12 usually they don't put them on the black soil, he
13 says they're on the sandier soils, the solar farms
14 are, is what he told me.
15 And then another thing that we talked
16 about soil, how good a farm. If you go out and
17 rent a farm that's not quite as good PI or 140 or
18 some your costs are all the same. I mean, you've
19 got the same fertilizer, the same seed, the same
20 chemicals, it's just your bottom line isn't as high
21 -- your net dollar just isn't as good on poor
22 ground. That's the reason I like to let the good
23 ground -- 'cause every morning when I get up when

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1 the crops are growing I'll drive down the road and
2 see how the corn's coming up. I mean, ask my wife,
3 that's my life, that's all I've ever done. And
4 just like this house here, you look out and you see
5 the corn growing.
6 And I know this summer I asked Mr.
7 Schieler there -- I don't talk to Glenn too much, I
8 have lately here a little bit with us feeding some
9 cattle together. But I told him, I said, what kind
10 of corn do you have on that farm, I said, that is
11 really good looking corn, it really has big ears on
12 it. And he told me the Beck number. I don't know
13 if Glenn remembers that or not. But I asked him
14 just what -- 'cause I noticed that on that farm
15 before anything came up.
16 And don't get me wrong, I mean, I
17 know ISU, we go to a lot of basketball games there
18 and when they introduce people they show big
19 windmills. But what they do show is the McLean
20 County cornfields and how green and how pretty they
21 are. And I just -- I'd just like to keep something
22 close by good productive ground in production for
23 McLean County. McLean County is noted all over for

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1 their production of corn and soybeans. So that's
2 about all I had to say. Thank you.
3 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you very much.
4 Anyone else have testimony on this case? You'd
5 like to be sworn in?
6 MR. MASTERS: Yeah.
7 BRETT MASTERS,
8 The witness, having been first duly
9 sworn upon his oath, testified as follows:
10 MR. FINNIGAN: State your name and
11 address again for the record.
12 MR. MASTERS: Brett Masters,
13 B-R-E-T-T, M-A-S-T-E-R-S. 20647 East 3000 North
14 Road, Gridley, Illinois. I was sent in to
15 represent Phyllis Masters, P-H-Y-L-L-I-S,
16 M-A-S-T-E-R-S, that would be my mother, who
17 actually owns the house in the southeast corner of
18 the proposed outlined facility.
19 In her words, my residence is only
20 200 feet from the barrier of 450 feet where you
21 included the total. That is way too close to my
22 home. If I went to sell my home I would not be
23 able to do so with a huge ugly solar farm adjacent

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1 to my property. According to the Pantagraph the
2 floodgates have been opened to solar energy farms
3 in McLean County. McLean County has approved some
4 of the already nine applicants to build these solar
5 farms in McLean County.
6 Another concern is why take the best
7 land in the whole of the Midwest, if not the entire
8 U.S., and not use it for its real potential which
9 is grain crops? We are the breadbasket of this
10 country. If you cover the land with solar panels
11 it no longer can be used for this.
12 These farms can last as long as
13 40 years, they are made for -- made of several
14 toxic materials as well as the batteries that
15 could, and eventually will, leak acid into the
16 farmland that goes into the ground that leads to
17 nearby creeks and residential wells.
18 The increase of heat that is
19 generated is the concern as land or (inaudible) us
20 on these panels and are literally burned. The
21 prevailing winds from the south and west will cause
22 even hotter winds which in turn burns up the
23 moisture for nearby crops and makes it hotter on

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1 nearby livestock, let alone making homeowners use
2 more electricity to keep their homes cool in the
3 summer months due to the extreme heat these panels
4 cause.
5 The fact is that we will be increased
6 traffic on -- and noise due to the building and
7 maintenance of this proposed solar farm.
8 There is a disposal of the panels to
9 consider when they are no longer useful. They are
10 more toxic than nuclear waste. Who wants that in
11 their state landfills?
12 All of this information that has been
13 brought to you has been found from Science dot com
14 which was her resource.
15 The only thing I can think of that I
16 would like to say on my behalf, because I'm there
17 as well. I travel that road to and from work every
18 day going to El Paso. I literally do not want to
19 have to look at that driving down the road as well
20 as look out my front door or walk to my mailbox and
21 see all these solar panels. I mean, that's just --
22 how would you like to have that across from your
23 home? I mean, can't we find this somewhere less

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1 impacting on somebody's home, residential area? I
2 mean, couldn't you propose this to be more of
3 something on buildings in cities somewhere where
4 they're not an eyesore for people. That's all I
5 have.
6 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Did you
7 have any questions? Did you want to ask him any
8 questions?
9 MR. RICKARD: No.
10 MR. FINNIGAN: Anyone else have
11 testimony? Okay. At this point I think we're at
12 the point of maybe closing statement.
13 MR. RICKARD: So in -- to respond to
14 some of the points that were raised during
15 testimony. There is a solar panel out there that
16 generates a large amount of heat. Those are solar
17 thermal collectors, they are basically big curved
18 mirrors with a pipe running down the middle, the
19 mirror reflects sunlight under the pipe to generate
20 steam, the steam drives a turbine. Those are
21 famous for generating heat and it's entirely
22 separate to what's been proposed here. The solar
23 Photovoltaic panels that are being proposed,

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1 they're not associated with heat generation.
2 The idea that there are major toxic
3 chemicals included in the solar panels. There is a
4 solar Photovoltaic technology made of cadmium and
5 telluride which could be toxic if it were to leach
6 into the ground. Again, that's not what we're
7 proposing here. We're proposing crystalline
8 silicon solar panels which is relatively inert and
9 is not -- is not on the list of banned or
10 controlled toxic substances.
11 I would also like to say, if there is
12 a condition on the vegetative screening, I'd be
13 happy for it to read that we would plant the trees
14 at a minimum of ten feet on center or as directed
15 by County staff, if they feel that there's a better
16 way to do it.
17 And those were my closing comments.
18 Thank you all for your time.
19 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. You want
20 to take a break, anybody? We've kind of run a
21 little longer than I thought. Open it up for
22 discussion. You want some discussion on this one?
23 Yeah, I guess, Mr. Kingdon, you can give a closing

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1 statement, if you want to.
2 MR. KINGDON: A closing statement?
3 MR. FINNIGAN: You don't have to but
4 you can if you want to.
5 MR. KINGDON: One thing I did not
6 mention, I didn't know it until tonight though.
7 They're going to plant a bunch of trees across from
8 my home. Is if we go down to the end of the
9 property, the property's about a third of the way
10 to the T-road down there. But I guess, I don't
11 know, trees would be okay, I guess. But it's still
12 going to be there, the windmill, you're still going
13 to see it to my notion. And it's not going to see
14 the cornfields and the crops growing.
15 So I just hope the County Board can
16 help us out here and see that we're trying to
17 protect the good farm ground in McLean County which
18 I've lived here all my life and hope they can take
19 it to Kansas or Missouri or somewhere else. Thank
20 you.
21 MR. FINNIGAN: Thank you. Mr.
22 Masters, would you like to make a closing
23 statement?

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1 MR. MASTERS: No.
2 MR. FINNIGAN: Okay. So I think
3 that's -- this part's closed. I thought it was a
4 minute ago but they were right. I stand corrected.
5 Any discussion.
6 MR. DEAN: I can empathize with the
7 people who don't want this here. But it's a
8 permitted use in my view and we can't tell the
9 landowner that owns this piece of property that
10 they cannot have a permitted use. It's a lot like
11 the windmills that we've dealt with. So I think
12 this is the same thing.
13 MR. FINNIGAN: I agree with you. 142
14 PI farm ground should be preserved but we no -- we
15 don't have the power to do it. That was always one
16 of my thoughts when we were talking about these. I
17 asked the question can it be anywhere else and it
18 comes down, well, it has to be close to a
19 three-phase line, it has to be close to a
20 generating facility or whatever. And so it kind of
21 trumps the idea of where do they put it? On good
22 ground. And it always seems like we give up quite
23 a bit of good ground. But the landowner is making

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1 that choice, not us. My thought is that eventually
2 it's going to come back to farm and it will be
3 better. It will be like being in the government
4 program for that amount of years and maybe we're
5 preserving for our next generation.
6 MS. TURNER: My other thought is is
7 as much as I'm sure all the applicants would love
8 for their projects to be approved and for them to
9 win at the lottery that is coming forth, the
10 chances of even a quarter of these making it
11 through is not very good. So while it seems like
12 we're approving a lot of them, they will not all be
13 built, not even close.
14 MR. KURITZ: As far as the view and
15 changing the view, Frank Miles stated it one night
16 in here, you can't buy a view because you can't
17 control what your neighbor puts on his property.
18 MS. TAYLOR: I guess the other thing
19 I would like to mention too is that it is -- solar
20 energy is much less damaging to the environment
21 than other types of energy. And the environment is
22 affecting what happens to farmland and to our
23 climate too. And so we can't avoid some kind of

1 change if we're going to develop new kinds of
2 energy. And you're talking about not just the soil
3 and farmland but the health of the environment in
4 McLean County.

5 MR. FINNIGAN: One thing that I would
6 add is that last year remember about this time we
7 were doing wind farms for three months with two
8 different wind farms and the last -- they come up
9 and told us, you know, why don't you -- don't do
10 wind but we'd sure support solar. They're not here
11 tonight but that's what was told to us, if you
12 remember. Solar doesn't hurt anybody.

13 MS. TAYLOR: And I think emphasizing
14 again from everything I've read and from what
15 you've said, the soil's not going to be damaged,
16 there will be plants on it that will keep the soil
17 fertile and so when the wind farm goes out, you
18 know, that's an appealing part of the whole plan.

19 MR. FINNIGAN: Anything?

20 MS. CARLTON: No.

21 MR. FINNIGAN: You ready to go to
22 standards? Standard 1. Standard 2. Standard 3.
23 Four. Five. Six. And seven.

1 in the evening. And anyone can call our office to
2 find out what the result is and I will send a
3 letter with the result from the County Board later
4 that week.

5 MR. RICKARD: Thank you. Thank you
6 all very much.

7 MR. FINNIGAN: Meeting adjourned at
8 9:26.

9 (Hearing was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.)
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1 MR. KURITZ: I move we recommend
2 approval of SU-18-30 with the conditions proposed
3 by staff.

4 MS. CARLTON: I'll second that.

5 MR. FINNIGAN: Got a motion by
6 Kuritz, second by Carlton. Can we have a roll call
7 vote.

8 MR. DICK: Bangert.

9 MR. BANGERT: Yes.

10 MR. DICK: Kuritz.

11 MR. KURITZ: Yes.

12 MR. DICK: Dean.

13 MR. DEAN: Yes.

14 MR. DICK: Turner.

15 MS. TURNER: Yes.

16 MR. DICK: Finnigan.

17 MR. FINNIGAN: Yes.

18 MR. DICK: Carlton.

19 MS. CARLTON: Yes.

20 MR. DICK: Taylor.

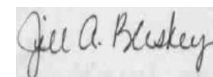
21 MS. TAYLOR: Yes.

22 MR. DICK: This goes to the County
23 Board the third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

1 CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

2
3 I, JILL A. BLESKEY, Certified Shorthand
4 Reporter, Registered Professional Reporter, and
5 Notary Public of the State of Illinois, do hereby
6 certify that the foregoing is a true, correct, and
7 complete copy of all proceedings conducted before
8 the McLean County Zoning Board of Appeals,
9 Government Center, 115 East Washington Street,
10 Bloomington, Illinois on January 2nd, 2019, at 7:00
11 p.m.

12 Dated this 9th day of January, 2019.
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23



Jill A. Bleskey, CSR-RPR

21 "OFFICIAL SEAL"
22 Jill A. Bleskey
23 Notary Public, State of Illinois
My Commission Expires 4/25/20

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