


TO: Redwood County Planning Commission

FROM: Nick Brozek 
Land Use and Zoning Supervisor
Redwood County Environmental Office

DATE: February 10, 2020

RE: Planning Commission Hearing on February 24, 2020



A meeting of the Redwood County Planning Commission has been scheduled for Monday, the 24th day of February, 2020, beginning at 1:00 o'clock p.m. at the Board Room of the Redwood County Government Center located at 403 South Mill Street, Redwood Falls, MN 56283.

The meeting will involve three (3) public hearings. A brief summary of the subject matter of the hearings is set forth below.

1. Public hearing on Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by Michelle Simms of U.S. Solar o/b/o landowners Todd & Candas Schouvieller.

United States Solar Corporation is requesting to construct a community solar garden on 230th Street, near the intersection of that street and State Hwy 68, about 2.5 miles southeast of the City of Morgan. The property is owned by Todd & Candas Schouvieller. Todd Schouvieller signed off on the Conditional Use Permit application. US Solar has signed a long term lease for the site from the Schouviellers. The proposed site is located on the south side of 230th Street/County Hwy 72, immediately east of State Hwy 68, in the Northwest Quarter of Section 36, Morgan Township, parcel number 59-036-2020. The site is in the Agricultural District.

The facility will consist of a one (1) megawatt solar array on approximately 8.33 acres. The project will generate enough electricity to power about 225 homes and will be open for subscription by Xcel Energy customers.

Equipment to be installed includes solar panels, inverters, and single-axis tracker racking installed on piles or piers. The maximum height will be about 12'.

A 15' wide unpaved access road will be constructed to serve the site from County Hwy 72/230th Street. A new road approach will be constructed for the access road. Temporary parking area and portable waste disposal containers will be provided during the construction phase. Two permanent parking spots will be provided for vegetation maintenance and other employees.

The ground underneath and between the solar panels will be seeded with a mix of pollinator-friendly, low-lying, deep-rooted plants. USS Steamboat Solar LLC will control for noxious weeds during the life of the project (25 years).

A farm-field style perimeter fence will be constructed around the solar array for security. The fence will not exceed 8 feet in height and will not use barbed wire.

A permanent infiltration basin will be constructed in the southeast end of the site to collect surface runoff water.

The location of the proposed solar garden is currently a tilled field. The existing surface water drainage pattern is that the surface water flows east toward Hwy 68 (and the proposed basin).

There is no county drainage tile on the project site. The closest public tile is located about 1000 feet south of the site. Additional county tile is located just over 1000 feet from the site, on the opposite side of State Hwy 68.

The site will be connected to the power grid via an existing Xcel distribution line located on the east side of Hwy 68.

The three nearest rural dwellings to the proposed solar garden are as follows: (1) Barry & Ann Weber, about 850 feet south of the site; (2) Scott & Michelle Phillips, about 1040 feet north of the site; and (3) a farm building site owned by Roger Jensen Disclaimer Trust, about 1400 feet southwest of the site.

This is the seventh solar garden application in Redwood County since 2015. Of the other six, one has been built and is operational (Jerry Huiras/Geronimo Energy) and two have expired and not been renewed (Sunshare – Green and Tauer sites), and three are under construction (Peterson, Green, and Hoffbeck). The Huiras site is a 3 MW site and the other sites are 1 MW each. The proposed project would raise the total permitted MW in the Xcel territory to 7 MW.

The applicant has submitted a decommissioning plan addressing the disposition of the facility should it cease to be used for twelve months or reach the end of its useful life. At that time, the system will be shut down and the panels, racking, poles, cables, posts, inverters, trans-formers, concrete pads, fencing, and access driveway will be removed and properly disposed of. The site will then be restored to its pre-installation status as an agricultural field.

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.

2. Public hearing on Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by Michelle Simms of U.S. Solar o/b/o landowner Wayne Weber Revocable Trust.

United States Solar Corporation is requesting to construct a community solar garden on County Hwy 2, immediately north of the City of Morgan. The property is owned by Wayne Weber Revocable Trust. Wayne Weber signed off on the Conditional Use Permit application. US Solar has signed a long term lease for the site from Weber, as trustee of the trust. The proposed site is located on the east side of County Hwy 2, in the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section

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15, Morgan Township, parcel number 59-015-2040. The site is in the Urban Expansion District.

The facility will consist of a one (1) megawatt solar array on approximately 7.8 acres. The project will generate enough electricity to power about 225 homes and will be open for subscription by Xcel Energy customers.



Equipment to be installed includes solar panels, inverters, and single-axis tracker racking installed on piles or piers. The maximum height will be about 12’.

A 15’ wide unpaved access road will be constructed to serve the site from County Hwy 2. A new road approach will be constructed for the access road. Temporary parking area and portable waste disposal containers will be provided during the construction phase. Two permanent parking spots will be provided for vegetation maintenance and other employees.

The ground underneath and between the solar panels will be seeded with a mix of pollinator-friendly, low-lying, deep-rooted plants. USS Steamboat Solar LLC will control for noxious weeds during the life of the project (25 years).

A farm-field style perimeter fence will be constructed around the solar array for security. The fence will not exceed 8 feet in height and will not use barbed wire.

A permanent infiltration basin will be constructed in the southwest end of the site to collect surface runoff water.

The location of the proposed solar garden is currently a tilled field. The existing surface water drainage pattern is that the surface water flows southwest toward the Verizon Wireless communications tower site, at 25607 County Hwy 2 (and the proposed basin).

There is county drainage tile located south and west of the project site. Branch 2, of Branch B, of Branch 16 of Judicial Ditch 17 is located about 150 feet south of the site. This 6” tile line runs west into Branch B of Branch 16, JD 17, a 12” main flowing north, about 100 feet west of the project site.

The site will be connected to the power grid via an existing Xcel distribution line located on the east side of County Hwy 2.

The three nearest rural dwellings to the proposed solar garden are as follows: (1) Cory Faulds, about 500 feet north of the site; (2) Wayne Weber, about 770 feet north of the site; and (3) Michael & Amy Heidemann, about 1100 feet east of the site. Additionally, the city limits of the City of Morgan are about 550 feet south of the project site, and the residences of Kamholz 1st Addition to the City of Morgan are about 625 feet (and further away) from the site. The Morgan football field is about 325 south of the site.

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This is the eighth solar garden application in Redwood County since 2015. Of the other seven, one has been built and is operational (Jerry Huiras/ Geronimo Energy) and two have expired and not been renewed (Sunshare – Green and Tauer sites), and three are under construction (Peterson, Green, and Hoffbeck). The seventh is the Schouvieller site references above. The Huiras site is a 3 MW site and the other sites are 1 MW each. The proposed project would raise the total permitted MW in the Xcel territory to 8 MW, provided the Schouvieller project is also approved.



The applicant has submitted a decommissioning plan addressing the disposition of the facility should it cease to be used for twelve months or reach the end of its useful life. At that time, the system will be shut down and the panels, racking, poles, cables, posts, inverters, trans-formers, concrete pads, fencing, and access driveway will be removed and properly disposed of. The site will then be restored to its pre-installation status as an agricultural field.

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.

3. Public hearing on Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by Paul Wallert of Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative.

The Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative (SMBSC) is seeking to expand its existing beet piling facility, located on the north side of State Hwy 19, about 5 miles west of the City of Redwood Falls. The existing facility is on a 23-acre parcel in the southwest corner of Section 31, Delhi Township. For the expansion, SMBSC has purchased another 20-acre parcel from Lloyd and Loretta Panitzke just to the west of their current site. The new 20-acre piece is in the southeast corner of Section 36, Kintire Township.

The existing site is zoned I-1 Industrial, because at the time the beet piling facility was originally established, it was considered an industrial use under the zoning ordinance. Consequently, SMBSC was required both to rezone the property and apply for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). However, pursuant to the recent ordinance codification and amendments, the use is now considered a commercial agricultural use, which is a conditional use in the agricultural district. Thus rezoning is not required for the expansion.

SMBSC plans to keep its existing beet piling slab facility as-is, and add a new facility immediately to the west. This facility will consist of a central 60' wide bituminous piling slab, running north to south, roughly down the center of the new 20-acre site, with clay-lined piling slabs on either side of the bituminous. The new site will be accessed from the existing site, using the existing road access from State Hwy 19. Two ponds will be excavated at the north end of the 20-acre site, to collect surface water run-off.

County drainage tile, part of JD 33, Lateral F, is present on the project site, and will need to be moved, or re-routed, so as not to impact drainage. This includes 10" Later 1 of Lateral F, which starts in the middle of the project area and flows north, where it connects with the main line of

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Lateral F, flowing down from the north. Lateral F drains all or parts of properties in Section 36 and the south half of Section 25, Kintire Township. Lateral F outlets into JD 33 about ½ of a mile west of the project site.

The three nearest rural dwellings to the project site are as follows:

(1) Lloyd & Loretta Panitzke, about 840 feet east of the site; (2) Jerome & Donna Lieble, about 3200 feet west of the site; and (3) a farm building site owned by Gordon Carity, about 3400 feet east of the site. These measurements are taken from the proposed expansion area, not from the existing piling slab facility.

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.



