

New Bremen Virtual Community Meeting Q&A

May 6, 2021

1. Where is this project going to be located?

This project will be located in the Town of New Bremen in Lewis County, NY. A preliminary layout can be viewed on Slide 20 of the presentation slide deck, available [here](#).

2. What options are there for landscaping?

TRC will complete a landscaping plan for the project to support visual screening and mitigation. Generally speaking, that landscaping will utilize a mix of coniferous and deciduous species, primarily native species, planted outside of the project fencing.

3. Is this power going to be used in the North Country or supply other areas?

Electricity takes the flow of least resistance, just like water. We will be injecting the power produced by this project into the grid from our project substation via the Bremen-Lowville 115 kV line. That transmission line will bring the power to another substation, and from there the power will move again, being split off to distribution substations further and further down the line. From the initial 115 KV level, the power will be transformed down and distributed within local neighborhoods. Energy and electrons typically get utilized in the area where they are created, as long as the demand for this power exists. If the demand in areas closest to the project is not high enough to use up all of the electrons that are created by the project, then those electrons will continue to travel downstream through the State transmission lines until they are used up.

4. Why do we need more solar projects in Lewis County?

The key factors needed to make a solar project viable in a particular area include: availability of flat, open land; access to interconnection (transmission lines); willing landowners; and host municipalities with solar laws enabling responsible solar development. Lewis County has several great locations for solar development, based on the terrain and accessibility of transmission lines/interconnection, as well as the fact that laws have been adopted in many towns, including New Bremen, that allow for responsible solar development.

5. What steps have been taken by your company to preserve as much good farmland as possible? Do you feel you have done everything you can to that end and still have a viable project? Dairy is very important to the County.

For their part, the County IDA is taking some practical steps to minimize the amount of prime agricultural acreage being used for solar projects by creating some incentives to build on alternate lands. On our end, as part of the siting process for this project, we are looking to

minimize impacts to many environmental resources, one of them being prime farmlands. The 94-c siting process requires the minimization and mitigation of environmental impacts, and one of the 94-c application exhibits is specifically focused on agricultural resources.

Not only do we try to minimize our impact on prime farmlands, but we take into consideration forested areas, wetlands, areas of historical significance, etc. just to name a few. As a result of the minimization of impact on these resources, we feel we are able to build an efficient, safe and productive project in this area in New Bremen.

6. Can I see the intervenor funding slide and info again?

Intervenor funding information can be viewed on Slide 32 of the presentation, available [here](#). Additional information is also available on the [ORES website](#).

With the filing of the 94-c application, New Bremen Solar is required to submit \$1,000 per megawatt which will be available as intervenor funding. 75% of the funds are reserved for municipalities, and the remaining 25% of funds are for community participants who can request funding to participate in the process.

7. Will there be any incentives for neighboring properties?

There will likely not be any incentives for neighboring properties specifically, but as mentioned in the presentation, there are a number of project benefits that will impact the community as a whole, including the \$500 per megawatt per year residential utility bill credit that will be spread throughout the community over 10 years (a yearly credit distributed among all residential electricity users).

To the extent that neighboring individuals may have issues with things like viewshed, we will listen to everybody's concerns as we develop our landscaping plan for the project. If anybody has any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out directly to us, we will be glad to talk over the phone or sit down with you to discuss.

8. Are there Google Earth or GIS maps available? Where are the project boundaries? Can we see the project map so that we can zoom in?

There are not any KMZs or GIS maps available at this point. The layout included in the presentation is a preliminary map that we will be continuing to work on, but when we submit the 94-c application the project map will be finalized and publicly available. If you would like to zoom in on the preliminary layout, you can do so by viewing it on Slide 20 of the [slide deck](#). Typically, we work with the local town to build a map of the final layout and provide that to the town, so that the map can be put up at the town building/town clerk's office.

As regards boundaries, you can sort of think of Route 126 as our northern boundary, and certainly not as far as 812 to the south, but some of the roads that dissect our project are Cut

Off, Deveines and Artz Road, and the project is bordered on the western side by Van Amber Road. It's kind of a long and narrow project area. Another thing to note is that the panel locations have fence lines that just go around the portions of panels, rather than the entire project area. We bring this up because in the past we've had folks ask about wildlife, and so we want to make it clear that there is plenty of room for animals to get around the various fenced portions of the project area. Additionally, there are some slots that are created underneath the fences to allow certain species to cruise through the project area, and the fences are typically about seven feet tall.

9. What will this do to my property value if they are located near me? How will this affect my property value once it is up and running?

There haven't yet been any of these larger solar projects built in New York state due to the permitting process (it's a cumbersome process that takes a while), so we are leveraging real estate reports that have been done in other states. In these reports, the solar projects being studied have shown no diminishing return impacts to the current values of nearby properties. In some places, the values have gone up depending on how the towns utilize the incentives (PILOT payments, host community agreement payments, etc.) that come with the project. [Brett Hastings] personally lives in the middle of a wind park, and his property values, if anything, have increased based on the improvements that were made in the local town as a byproduct of the project.

Find below a number of industry studies, as well as published university-led studies, that have been conducted on this topic:

- [September 2020 Study by the University of Rhode Island: Property Value Impacts of Commercial-Scale Solar Energy in MA and RI](#)
- [June 2020 Adjacent Property Values Solar Impact Study: A Study of Eight Existing Solar Farms \(located in Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois, North Carolina & Virginia\)](#)
- [June 2020 Round Hill Solar Impact Study \(located in Augusta County, Virginia\)](#)
- [April 2020 Flat Run Solar Impact Study \(located in Taylor County, Kentucky\)](#)
- [May 2018 Study by the University of Texas at Austin: An Exploration of Property-Value Impacts Near Utility-Scale Solar Installations](#)
- [May 2018 Adjacent Property Values Solar Impact Study: A Study of Nine Existing Solar Farms \(located in Illinois, Indiana and Minnesota\)](#)
- [March 2018 Adjacent Property Values Solar Impact Study: A Study of Nine Existing Solar Farms \(located in Illinois and Indiana\)](#)
- [February 2016 Oakwood Solar Impact Study \(located in Mebane, North Carolina\)](#)

10. When will a specific plan showing the impacts to the viewshed be available?

Per the 94-c regulations, we will be completing viewshed analyses for this project, which will include identification of visually sensitive resources, viewshed mapping, and photo simulations

demonstrating what the project will look like within the existing landscape, with and without landscaping. The viewshed analyses, including these photo simulations, will comprise the visual impact assessment, which will be included in the extensive 94-c application. When submitted, (likely late Summer 2021), the application and all of the visual impact components will be available to the public.

As we prepare our visual analyses, the proposed locations of where we take photos for the visual simulations will be taken to the town for review, to make sure that we're encompassing all of their concern areas. We'll also be working on the landscaping plan and will be showing that to the town as well.

11. How close to the road will the panels be?

Both the Town of New Bremen and 94-c regulations include setbacks from roads. The local law (New Bremen) states that panels shall be located at least 75 feet from the centerline of any State road or at least 60 feet from the centerline of any County or Town road. The 94-c regulations state that all solar facility components must be set back at least 50 feet from the centerline of public roads. Thus, the actual panels will be set back 50-75 feet from the centerline of roads, but visual screening and the fencing and visual screening may be closer.