

Date: December 11, 2023

Case: Gregg Road / Community Solar (CU 24-04)

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Transcript of Hearing Conducted on December 11, 2023

MONTGOMERY	COUNTY OFFICE OF ZONING	1	APPEARANCE	S
AND ADMI	NISTRATIVE HEARINGS	2		
	x	3	ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT:	
IN RE:	:	4	PETER CIFERRI, ESQUIRE	
CONDITIONAL USE APP	LICATION FOR :	5	MCMILLAN METRO, P.C.	
A SOLAR COLLECTION	SYSTEM IN AN : Case No.	6	7811 Montrose Road	
AIR ZONE LOCATED ON	GREGG AND : CU 24-04	7	Suite 400	
ZION ROADS, UNDER T	HE STANDARD :	8	Potomac, Maryland 20854	
SET FORTH IN ARTICL	E 59, :	9	301.251.1180, x307	
SECTION 3.7.2.	:	10		
	x	11	ALSO PRESENT:	
		12	SARA BEHANNA (Administrative Spe	cialist II
		13	Montgomery County Office of Zoni	ng and
		14	Administrative Hearings)	
	UBLIC HEARING	15	DONALD ZIMMERMAN (Witness)	
	HONORABLE KATHLEEN BYRNE	16	NICK DRIBAN (Witness)	
	kville, Virginia	17	KEVIN FOSTER (Witness)	
_	, December 11, 2023	18	TIMOTHY LONGFELLOW (Witness)	
	9:36 a.m.	19		
		20		
		21		
		22		
Job No.: 506133		23		
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	teember 11, 2025
1 CONTENTS (CONTD)	7 1 PROCEEDINGS
2 EXHIBITS	2 (Whereupon, the court reporter was duly
3 (Retained by the Court)	3 sworn.)
4 HEARING EXHIBIT PAGE	4 THE COURT: All right. Good morning,
5 Exhibit 9 Application Notice Letter 61	5 everyone. Thank you for your patience. We just
6 Exhibit 10 Image of posted sign 62	6 want to make sure we're getting everything up and
7 Exhibit 11 Sign Location Map 62	7 running. Hopefully, this is our new norm, where we
8 Exhibit 14 Conditional Plan Use 49	8 have the option of being remote and we have the
9 Exhibit 14D Site Plan 17	9 option of being here in person. I appreciate
10 Exhibit 14E Site Detail Sheet 18	10 everyone showing up on time. And everyone is
11 Exhibit 14F Composite Landscape Plan 55	11 remote, except for those of us here in our hearing
12 Exhibit 15 Forest Conservation Plan 57	12 room. So thank you again very much.
13 Exhibit 15D Impervious Surface Plan 47	13 My name is Katie Byrne and I will be the
14 Exhibit 16 Fire Access Plan 54	
	14 Hearing Examiner for the public hearing for the 15 conditional use application for a solar collection
<u> </u>	
	16 system in an air zone located on Gregg and Zion
17 Approval	17 Roads, and only under the standard set forth in
18 Exhibit 20 Letter Issued by the Maryland 60	18 Article 59, Section 3.7.2. This hearing is being
Department of Natural Resources	19 conducted in a hybrid format. Again, as we just
20 Exhibit 21 Scope of Work and Bid 25	20 stated, which means that you have the option of
Demonstrating Work for	21 coming here into the hearing room or participating
22 Maryland Pollinator-Friends	22 remotely via Zoom.
Designation Program	This is Application CU2404, Alder Energy
24 Exhibit 23 Letter from Pepco Allowing 24	24 Gregg Road Community Solar. I will listen to
25 Connection	25 testimony, review evidence, and render an opinion
6	1 in the application pursuant to the criteria set
1 CONTENTS (CONTD) 2 EXHIBITS	1 in the application pursuant to the criteria set 2 forth for conditional uses in Article 59, Section
• /	3 7.3.1. If you disagree with my decision, you may
	4 appeal it to the Board of Appeals within 10 days
5 Exhibit 24 Pepco Email Approval for 25	5 after my decision is issued.
6 2 MW Project	6 At this time, I'd like to go through,
7 Exhibit 25 Contract with Pepco 25	7 identify the parties, make we'll make sure
8 Exhibit 26 Email from Office of 49	8 everyone's mics are working, and that you can also
9 Agriculture	9 hear and see us clearly. So we'll start with Mr.
10 Exhibit 28 Copy of Analysis 70	10 Ciferri. If you could go ahead and give us your
11 Exhibit 29 Culvert Drainage Area Map 72	11 spell your name for the court reporter, and let's
12 Exhibit 37 Office of Agriculture 48	12 make sure we can all hear each other.
Recommendations	MR. CIFERRI: Good morning for the
14 Exhibit 40 Resume of Tim Longfellow, P.E. 66	14 record, Peter Ciferri, C-I-F-E-R-R-I.
15 Exhibit 41 Resume of C. Nick Driban, 29	15 THE COURT: And if you wouldn't mind,
16 P.E., PTOE	16 could you introduce all of the witnesses that you
17 Exhibit 43 Resume of Kevin Foster 37	17 have here today?
18 Exhibit 44 Resume of Donald Zimmerman 14	MR. CIFERRI: Sure, absolutely. With me
19 Exhibit 45 Revised Traffic Statement 32	19 is Donald Zimmerman
20 Exhibit 46 Sight Distance Evaluation 67	20 THE COURT: Mr and Mr. Zimmerman
21 Exhibit 48 Planning Board Letter 27	21 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Hello. Don Zimmerman.
22 Exhibit 49 Staff Report 26	22 Hopefully you can hear me.
23	23 THE COURT: Excellent. Thank you.
24 25	MR. CIFERRI: and Kevin Foster MR. FOSTER: Good morning. Kevin Foster,

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9	
1 here.	1 to work through as we go. Let's see. And to see
2 THE COURT: Great.	2 the hearing room there, you can pin the video. You
3 MR. CIFERRI: Nick Driban	3 can enlarge the screen. There's some fun little
4 MR. DRIBAN: Good morning. Nick Driban.	4 Zoom functions. If you need assistance in pinning
5 MR. CIFERRI: and Tim LongfelloW.	5 the video, we do have some instructions on our
6 MR. LONGFELLOW: Good morning. Tim	6 website.
7 Longfellow.	7 All right. So now we've gotten that out
8 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.	8 of the way. We only have it appears I don't
9 THE COURT: Excellent. Thank you.	9 think we have anyone here in opposition; we only
10 Thank you. All right. So now that we know that	10 have those that are here in support of the
11 everyone's cameras work, everyone's microphones	11 application. So Mr. Ciferri, if you'd like to make
12 work, I'd appreciate it if you could all remain	12 an opening statement, you can, then you can proceed
13 muted until it is your turn to speak. That just	13 with your presentation, the factual case, and any
14 helps cut down on feedback.	14 kind of closing statement and, again, work through
Just a just a few little Zoom	15 the exhibits how you see fit, and we'll go from
16 and hybrid hearing housekeeping details. We ask	16 there. All right.
17 that while you're speaking, you try not to	17 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.
18 interrupt someone else that is speaking unless you	18 THE COURT: Any if there's are
19 have an objection. We have a court reporter here,	19 there any questions before we begin? All right, Mr.
20 so it's difficult for him to understand what people	20 Ciferri, go ahead with your opening, if you wish to
21 are saying when there is crosstalk. If you're	21 have one, or you can jump right into testimony.
22 participating remotely, you can, if you're not	MR. CIFERRI: Yes. Just very briefly.
23 speaking, if you feel free to turn your camera	23 Good morning, and again, for the record, Peter
24 off, but when you are testifying, we will need your	24 Ciferri with the office of McMillan Metro for the
25 camera on.	25 Applicant. The Applicant is Alder Energy
10	
1 Let's see. You noticed at the very	1 Development, LLC, and we intend to demonstrate, via
	2 41 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

12 trate, via beginning, you might've heard something that said the testimony today and the record evidence, that that this hearing is being recorded. The Zoom the Applicant has satisfied each of the general 4 recording is only for the court reporter's 4 criteria for conditional use as set forth in 5 purposes, just for reference in case they need to 5 Section 7.3.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, and also 6 refer back to it. It's only backup. It is -- will that the Applicant has satisfied each of the 7 in no way be provided to the public. The chat specific criteria for a solar collection facility 8 function has been disabled. If you need wish to conditional use in the Ag Reserve Zone, which is 9 speak, please use your raise your hand option seven -- 3.7.2.b of the Zoning Ordinance. 10 whenever you wish to speak. You will not be able 10 So I introduced you very briefly to 11 to share screen during this process. What we have, 11 those who will be providing testimony. Just as a 12 all of the exhibits -- Mr. Ciferri, have you had an 12 little further context, Donald Zimmerman, the CEO 13 opportunity to take a look at the Exhibit list 13 of Alder Energy Development, he's been the lead on 14 online? 14 this project. He will testify primarily as to the 15 MR. CIFERRI: Yes. 15 facts surrounding the project and -- as it relates THE COURT: And it is -- has everything 16 to the property, and also some of the specific 16 17 that you need there? 17 criteria of the zoning ordinance that relates to 18 MR. CIFERRI: Yes, it does. 18 solar collection facilities and his expertise there. THE COURT: All right. Thank you. So Next, we will present Nick Driban, who is 19 20 we have our Zoom operator here. He will be able to 20 a traffic engineer, and he will testify as to the 21 pull up those exhibits directly from the OZAH 21 project's satisfaction with LATR guidelines. Third 22 website. He will then share screen. So if you 22 will be Kevin Foster. He's a land planner and 23 could just let us know which exhibit you wish to 23 landscape architect with GLW. Mr. Foster will 24 review, it will be pulled up on the screen, 24 testify to the bulk of the project details, as 25 everyone will be able to see it, and you'll be able 25 shown on the site plan and on the landscaping plan

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13	15
1 and Forest Conservation Plan, and specifically as	1 We've had a number of other projects developed in
2 those relate to the general zoning ordinance	2 PG County, Carroll County, now now Baltimore
3 criteria and several of the other specific criteria.	3 County, and and Montgomery County with this
4 And finally, Tim Longfellow, also with	4 project.
5 GLW, a civil engineer, will testify to site	5 Q Thank you.
6 distance evaluation that was necessary for the	6 MR. CIFERRI: I I would like to ask
7 project, stormwater management necessary for the	7 that Mr. Zimmerman be qualified as sort of a hybrid
8 project, and also a culvert analysis that was	8 witness, an expert witness on the topic of
9 specific to this property. So with that, I I'll	9 development and construction of solar collection
10 begin, unless there's any questions.	10 facilities, but also, he'll be continuing to
11 THE COURT: No, you can call your first	11 testify on a factual basis as well.
12 witness.	12 THE COURT: Admitted.
13 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. First witness is	13 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.
14 Donald Zimmerman.	14 Q Now, Don, you mentioned a term Community
15 THE COURT: Mr. Zimmerman, could you	15 Solar Project. Could you just explain for the
16 raise your right hand please? Do you promise to	16 Examiner what that means?
17 tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth?	17 A Right. So a community solar project was
18 MR. ZIMMERMAN: I do.	18 enabled through a Pilot Program Legislative Act
19 THE COURT: Thank you.	19 that basically it is a project that sends all its
20 Whereupon,	20 power to the grid, and then individual members of
21 DONALD ZIMMERMAN,	21 the community can subscribe to the power that's
22 being first duly sworn or affirmed to testify to	22 generated by this project. Those subscriptions are
23 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the	23 then credited against their bill and they get a
24 truth, was examined and testified as follows:	24 discount on their bill at the same time as
25 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT	25 supporting solar development in in in the
14	16
1 BY MR. CIFERRI:	1 county or well within the utility that they're
2 Q Good morning. Could you just state your	2 region that they're operating.
3 name and occupation for the record?	3 Q Is that the sort of project that this is?
4 A Sure. I'm Don Zimmerman. I am	4 A That's exactly what this is, yes.
5 President and CEO of Alder Energy Development.	5 Q And could you describe just briefly,
6 Q Thank you. And turning to Exhibit 44,	6 what was your site selection process? Why did you
7 have you had a chance to review that exhibit?	7 arrive on this particular site?
8 (Exhibit 44 was marked.)	8 A So, in general, our team looks at sites
9 A Yes.	9 that are of sufficient size to do a 2 megawatt AC
10 Q And is that an accurate copy of your	10 project. We want it to be already cleared; we want
11 resume?	11 it to be flat; we want it to be near a three-phase
12 A Yes, it is.	12 power that we can connect to easily, and in
13 Q Okay. What does your role entail with	13 general, you know, available. We we contact
14 Alder Energy Development?	14 land owners and and see if they would be
15 A So Alder Energy Development, I I lead	15 interested in leasing their land for a long-term
16 the group that develops community solar projects in	16 lease.
17 Maryland, among other states.	17 Q And could you describe that, your
18 Q And could you describe some of your	18 relationship with the land owner?
19 relevant experience with Alder Energy Development	19 A Yes. Mr. Stadler (phonetic) is the
20 in Maryland?	20 is the owner of Gregg Road, LLC. They are a
21 A Right. So we we've been involved in	21 landscaping business that well, let me rephrase
22 the Community Solar Bilet Dunguam since its	22 that They they grow troop for landscaping

22 that. They -- they grow trees for landscaping

23 purposes; they're a nursery, and our relationship

25 through a lease option agreement to lease his land

24 with him is we have a contractual relationship

22 the Community Solar Pilot Program since its

23 inception. We had one of the first two projects in

25 Dogwood Road and the Old Court Road projects.

24 operation in -- in the Community Solar Program, the

17	19
1 for a minimum of 25 years once the option is	1 that's 600 volts AC from multiple inverters
2 exercised.	2 there's 16 of them in this particular situation
3 Q Okay. And and do you have his	3 would be aggregated together in a panel board
4 authorization for the application?	4 that's mounted to that equipment pad in the middle
5 A Yes, we do.	5 of the drawing
6 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Turning to the	6 THE COURT: Did we lose him?
7 plan, specifically Exhibit 14D, have you had a	7 MR. ZIMMERMAN: 600 volts AC, the
8 chance to review the plans submitted as the	8 13,000 volts AC. Did you have comment, Peter?
9 conditional use plan?	9 BY MR. CIFERRI:
10 (Exhibit 14D was marked.)	10 Q No.
11 A Yes.	11 A Okay. And and then it's attached
12 Q And do those accurately describe your	12 THE COURT: Yeah. Just hang if you
13 proposal?	13 guys could hang on just one
14 A Yes, they are. They are what were	14 A to the power grid. We go underground
15 proposing.	15 to
16 Q Could you describe how how will the	16 THE COURT: If you all can hang on one
17 solar array itself be oriented with respect to	17 second.
18 with respect to the properties to the north?	18 A to the edge of the property where we
MR. CIFERRI: And if we could perhaps	19 go up to poles, and then attach to the power grid
20 see 14D, that might help.	20 across the road.
21 THE COURT: Sure.	21 Q Thank you. And approximately how many
22 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.	22 modules and panels are you proposing?
23 THE COURT: So 14D.	23 A There's over 5,000. The exact number is
MR. ZIMMERMAN: So the solar panels are	24 5,408 panels.
25 going to be facing south with the back of the solar	25 Q Okay. Does this solar array generate
18	20
1 panels facing to the north. They'll be tilted at	1 any noise, odors, dust, illumination, that would be
2 approximately 20 degrees and spaced in rows,	2 measurable beyond the property line?
3 running east to west.	3 A No. You'll you'll never know it's
4 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. And actually, I was	4 there by any of those parameters.
5 looking for 14D as in dog, but we can really, we	5 Q And based on your experience in the
6 can move to 14E, is actually probably a better	6 industry, do solar collection systems generate any
7 exhibit for the next few questions.	7 adverse health impacts to neighboring properties?
8 (Exhibit 14E was marked.)	8 A No, they do not.
9 THE COURT: Okay.	9 Q I I I want to ask a little bit
10 BY MR. CIFERRI:	10 about the construction of the project. How long
11 Q Now could you describe what pieces of	11 would it take to construct a project like this?
12 equipment are necessary for a solar array?	12 A With this project it's somewhere between
13 A Yeah. So so each panel is mounted to	13 four to six months, depending on availability of
14 a racking system. The one we have designed with is	14 crews and and, obviously, weather concerns.
15 what they call Two High in Portrait. So it's two	15 Q And what does that site development
16 panels stacked end-to-end, and these are driven	16 phase entail?
17 into the earth with steel piles. There's no	17 A Basically we start with any site prep
18 concrete. Generally, as you can see in the drawing	18 that's necessary. In this particular case there's
19 on the upper center there, each group of of	19 not a lot of site prep. We bring in a vibrating
20 modules, we generally call them a table, and in	20 pile driver. They drive the piles for the rack.
21 in this design, I believe we've done 26 panels per	21 The rack then gets installed. The solar panels are
22 table. And so, those are all aggregated into	22 mounted to the racks. Then the electrical team
23 something called an inverter that takes the DC from	23 comes in, puts their conduits in the ground, and
24 the solar, converts it to AC. The inverters that	24 then ties all the DC side of the system together
25 were chosen for this project output 600 volts AC,	25 that is poured for the transformer and electrical

23

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2.1

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1	equipment. Inverters are mounted. AC is brought
2	to the pad. Electrical equipment is is is
3	tied together.

We run a trench out to the poles.

5 We -- obviously, the poles on the power grid are

6 set at a separate time. We -- we go underground

7 with our 13.2 KV line to the poles. We bring it up

8 to the top of a pole, at which point the utility

9 then connects the system in. We test the system.

10 Obviously, once the powers -- once we're able to

11 energize it, we can test the system. Once it

12 passes all the tests and the utility has made their

13 tests, then they'll issue a permission to operate 14 certificate.

15 Q And once you have that permission to

16 operate, does that mean it's a basically usable

17 system in layman's terms?

18 A That's correct. Once we have permission

19 to operate, we will -- we'll -- we'll turn it on,

20 energize the system, and at that point,

21 subscriptions would've been sold and the

22 subscribers would be receiving the credits for the

23 power that it creates.

Q I see. And so, the zoning ordinance

25 criteria asks about things like hours of operation,

1 removal be minimized as part of site construction?

2 A So there will be -- will be no grading

3 of the field area itself, and the only -- there

4 will be a minimal amount of -- of earth work for

5 the pad and the trenches, which will obviously be

6 regraded and topsoil replaced, and there will be no

7 undercutting of the roadway that would -- that

8 would be put in to -- to access the facility.

9 Q And relatedly, does this construction of 10 the site require this scraping of topsoil? Is that

11 term used in the zoning ordinance?

12 A No, we don't scrape topsoil.

13 Q Okay. Does the Applicant propose the

14 use of any concrete as part of the project, and if 15 so, where?

16 A Yes. There will be some concrete and

17 that will generally only be under the pad where the

18 transformer and some of the switch gear is located.

19 Q Are you familiar with the requirements

20 of the State of Maryland's Net Metering Program?

21 A Yes.

22 Q And could you describe how this project

23 will comply with those criteria?

24 A Yes. This -- this project has gotten

25 approval from the Public Service Commission to

22

1 numbers of employees. Are there specific operating

2 hours for a site like this?

A Once it is -- is constructed, there

4 should be no personnel onsite except to do

5 maintenance, and which will be sporadic, at best.

Q Okay. I want to turn to the -- some of

7 the specific requirements of the zoning ordinance

8 for solar collection facilities. Have you had a

9 chance to review those?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And I'm going to ask you a series of

12 related questions --

13 A Sure.

14 Q -- the first being, is this facility

15 rated at more than 200 percent of on onsite energy

16 usage?

17 A This facility doesn't consume

18 significant amounts of energy. It predominantly is

19 a generator, not -- not a consumer.

20 Q Okay. Is it -- is it less than 2

21 Megawatts AC?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Yeah. And turning back to the

24 construction of the facility --you mentioned this

25 very briefly, I think -- how will grading and soil

1 participate in the Community Solar Program -- Pilot

2 Program. It has also received approval from the

3 utility to interconnect to its grid, and we have

4 both the approval documentation, as well as a

5 interconnection agreement that's been signed

between Alder Energy Development and Pepco.

7 MR. CIFERRI: And if I could refer to

8 Exhibit 23.

9 (Exhibit 23 was marked.)

10 BY MR. CIFERRI:

11 THE COURT: Okay.

MR. CIFERRI: If we could -- we could

13 share that.

14 THE COURT: Sure. We'll pull -- pull

15 that up in one moment.

16 Q I'm going to show you a series of

17 exhibits here. If you could just briefly explain

18 sort of the import of these different exhibits. So

19 this is Exhibit 23.

20 A Right. This is the exhibit, which --

21 which -- from Pepco to Alder Energy Development,

22 indicating that for this project, that they have

23 approved the interconnection and a brief

24 description of how that interconnection will take

25 place.

25	2	27
1 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. If we could show	1 Exhibit 48, which was the Planning Board's letter.	- /
2 Exhibit 24.	2 (Exhibit 48 was marked.)	
3 (Exhibit 24 was marked.)	3 BY MR. CIFERRI:	
4 BY MR. CIFERRI:	4 Q Were you also familiar with with the	
5 Q And what does that demonstrate?	5 letter transmitted by the Planning Board after its	
6 A So this is an acceptance into the open	6 hearing?	
7 category for year five of the pilot program, and in	7 A Yes.	
8 this particular case, this this came from the	8 Q And are you prepared to comply with the	
9 utility, which has been given the authority to	9 recommendations and conditions that the Planning	
10 to grant that by the Public Service Commission.	10 Board imposed in its recommendations?	
11 Q Thank you.	11 A Yes, we are.	
12 MR. CIFERRI: Exhibit 25.	12 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Thank you. I have	
13 (Exhibit 25 was marked.)		
,	13 no additional questions for Mr. Zimmerman at this	
14 A Yes. That is the interconnection	14 time.	
15 agreement, which is essentially the contract	15 THE COURT: Okay. Am I muted? Yeah.	
16 between, in our case, Alder Energy Development and	16 If you could unmute me because it looks like the	
17 the utility as per the interconnection of the	17 hold on one second. Can you all hear me?	
18 project.	18 MR. CIFERRI: Yes.	
19 Q Great. Thank you.	19 THE COURT: Oh, okay. Thank you. I	
20 MR. CIFERRI: If we could turn to	20 wasn't sure if I was muted or not. Just a quick	
21 Exhibit 21.	21 question. All right. So you answered the question	
22 (Exhibit 21 was marked.)	22 that had no conditions. Public meeting, would that	
23 Q Don, will the area under the solar	23 be something Mr. Zimmerman would testify to, or is	
24 collection facility be actively used for	24 that something one of your later witnesses would	
25 agricultural purposes?	25 testify to?	
26		28
1 A Yes. It will be a pollinator habitat.	1 MR. CIFERRI: I could do both. Mr.	
2 And we we are in the process of contracting with	2 Foster was at the pre-submission meeting, so I'm	
3 the company that is shown here to establish a a	3 going to ask him that question.	
4 pollinator-friendly well, certifiable pollinator	4 BY MR. CIFERRI:	
5 friendly habitat, and we intend to get it certified	5 Q But Mr. Zimmerman, to the best of your	
6 under the Maryland Pollinator Friendly	6 knowledge, was the property posted in accordance	
7 Certification Program.	7 with the with the notice criteria of the code?	
8 Q And what are in generalities, what	8 A Yes, I believe it was.	
9 are the steps that the the Applicant needs to	9 Q And to the best of your knowledge, was a	
10 take to get that kind of a certification?	10 pre-submission meeting required under the code?	
11 A Well, we need to establish that, you	11 A I am not sure, to be quite frank.	
12 know we need to need to plant the right	12 Q You don't did we have did we have	
13 excuse me the right seeds, get the get it	13 a pre-submittal meeting?	
14 established, and then there's a a visit by a	14 A A pre-submittal? Did we have a	
15 certified inspector that will then say that it has	15 pre-submittal? Yes, we did. Right. Yeah.	
16 met the requirements.	16 Q Yeah. Okay.	
17 Q Thank you.	MR. CIFERRI: To the Examiner, I'll ask	
18 MR. CIFERRI: Turning to turning	18 Mr. Foster a few more questions about that.	
19 briefly to Exhibit 49, the Staff Report.	THE COURT: That's fine. That's fine.	
20 (Exhibit 49 was marked.)	20 Like, I think the only question I had was regarding	
21 Q Don, have you had a chance to review the	21 how it was advertised. I know it was held by Zoom,	
22 Staff Report that was prepared by the Planning	22 but if Mr. Foster wants to get into those details,	
	O-1	
23 Department?	23 that's perfect. I think that was the only and	
23 Department?24 A Yes. Yes, we have.	23 that's perfect. I think that was the only and 24 that I wasn't sure if it was Mr. Zimmerman or a	

29	31
1 hearing. That's it. That's the only question I	1 in the past?
2 had for Mr. Zimmerman.	2 A Yes, I have.
3 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Thank you.	3 Q And including in Montgomery County?
4 MR. ZIMMERMAN: All right. Thank you.	4 A Including Montgomery County, and
5 THE COURT: Thank you.	5 including with OZAH before.
6 MR. CIFERRI: Next, we'll call Nick	6 Q Okay. And specific to solar projects;
7 Driban.	7 is that right?
8 THE COURT: Thank you.	8 A Not not in Montgomery County for
9 Whereupon,	9 solar, but elsewhere, yes.
10 C. NICK DRIBAN,	10 Q Right.
11 being first duly sworn or affirmed to testify to	11 MR. CIFERRI: Based on Mr. Driban's
12 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the	12 knowledge, training, and experience, I would ask
13 truth, was examined and testified as follows:	13 that he be qualified as an expert in
14 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT	14 transportation, planning, and traffic engineering
15 BY MR. CIFERRI:	THE COURT: Admitted as an expert.
16 Q Nick, could you just state your name and	16 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.
17 occupation for the record?	17 Q Mr. Driban, are you familiar with the
18 A Good morning. Nick Driban with Lenhart	18 LATR guidelines that would be respective to this
19 Traffic, Vice President.	19 application?
20 MR. CIFERRI: And if we could turn to	20 A Yes, I am.
21 Exhibit 41.	21 Q And are there specific guidelines for
22 (Exhibit 41 was marked.)	22 solar collection facilities?
23 Q Or, rather, Nick, have you had a chance	23 A The LATR guidelines are are broadly
24 to review Exhibit 41?	24 applied. They're the County's specific methodology
25 A Yes, I have.	25 for enforcing the Adequate Public Facilities
30	32
1 Q And is that an accurate copy of your	1 Ordinance as it pertains to traffic. And so, those
1 Q And is that an accurate copy of your 2 professional resume?	1 Ordinance as it pertains to traffic. And so, those 2 are very specifically laid out. Within those
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Q And is that an accurate copy of your professional resume? A It is. Q Okay. THE COURT: Thank you. Q Can you please describe your professional background as it's relevant to this application? A Yes. So I'm a traffic engineer, a transportation engineer, as I said, Vice President with Lenhart Traffic currently. Excuse me. I've heen employed in this capacity for about 17 years now. I'm a professional engineer, as well as a professional traffic operations engineer PTOE. Prior to my time with Lenhart traffic, where I've been for seven years, I worked at a firm called STB, where I was a a traffic engineer and tater led the traffic operations department, and then I also spent time at the Maryland State Highway administration as a reviewer of traffic impact studies throughout the state. And primarily with Lenhart traffic now, you know, we do hundreds attacle, including within Montgomery County.	1 Ordinance as it pertains to traffic. And so, those 2 are very specifically laid out. Within those 3 guidelines there's not a specific use for solar 4 facilities. It's a bit of a unique unique use 5 in that respect. 6 Q And did you evaluate the trip generation 7 standards with respect to this application? 8 A I did, yes. 9 Q As a result of your evaluation, did you 10 prepare a letter or a report? 11 A Yes; we prepared a traffic statement. 12 MR. CIFERRI: If you could turn to 13 Exhibit 45. Thank you. 14 (Exhibit 45 was marked.) 15 Q Okay. Is that an accurate copy of the 16 letter that you prepared? 17 A Yes, it appears to be. 18 Q And could you provide a summary of your 19 analysis for trip generation for this project? 20 A Yeah, certainly. So as I as I stated 21 previously, the County, Montgomery County, has very 22 detailed guidelines for review of the adequacy of

Conducted on December 11, 2023

35 1 and the methodology within those guidelines looks 1 once that construction phase is over and you move 2 at the number of person trips that a site will into sort of regular operation and all the 3 generate. So it could be walking, biking, driving, equipment is installed, there are no -- there are 4 of course, transit, and any site generating greater really no employees going to this site on a regular 5 than 50 peak hours -- so during the -- the busiest 5 -- on a regular basis. What you see is some, you 6 hour of the morning or busiest hour of -- the 6 know, mowing and landscaping activity to make sure 7 busiest hour of the evening. Fifty peak hour that the grass isn't growing up, you know, above 8 person trips, is required to do a full 8 the -- the solar panels, you know, that type of 9 transportation impact evaluation reviewing all sort of regular maintenance, but -- but not so 10 facilities. A site generating less than 50 peak 10 regular that it's occurring -- that you would see 11 hour person trips is exempt from any adequacy 11 those trips every single day during a typical 12 evaluation because it's considered to have a de 12 Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. 13 minimis impact on the -- on the surrounding 13 So the -- the result of all that is that 14 transportation network. 14 these sites generate zero trips on a -- on a So in this case, there is -- generally 15 typical day on average. You know, again, there may 16 speaking, the LATR guidelines have a really --16 be one or two here or there, they might be 17 have a very detailed methodology for determining 17 off-peak, but, typically, zero trips on a -- on a 18 trip generation for more common uses, so, like, a 18 day. And so, it's fully exempt -- this site is 19 residential use, a hotel use, shopping center, that 19 fully exempt from the County's Local Area 20 type of thing. For this use, as I said, initially, 20 Transportation Review in terms of requiring more 21 it's a bit of a unique use. It doesn't have a 21 detailed study, and it would have no impact 22 specific -- typically when we're looking at the 22 whatsoever once fully up and operating on the 23 context of the Local Area Transportation Review 23 surrounding transportation network. 24 24 Guidelines we're looking at -- at trip generation Q Thank you. 25 rates that are published elsewhere, and this use 25 MR. CIFERRI: I have no additional 34 36 1 doesn't have specific rates. And so, what we do questions for Mr. Driban. 1 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Driban. 2 in those cases is we coordinate with staff at Park 2 3 and Planning to determine how we're going to look 3 MR. DRIBAN: Thank you. 4 at trip generation; and in this case, trip 4 MR. CIFERRI: I ask that Mr. Driban can 5 generation was evaluated based on information from be excused also, unless there may be more questions 6 -- from the -- from the owner who testified for him later. 7 previously, Mr. Zimmerman, as well as information 7 THE COURT: No. Absolutely. Thank you, 8 on similar solar projects throughout the state of 8 Mr. Driban, for your time. 9 Maryland. 9 MR. DRIBAN: Thank you. 10 We've worked on a number of these, as I 10 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you. Third, I'll 11 alluded to previously, and solar facilities 11 call Kevin Foster. 12 essentially -- essentially generate zero traffic. 12 MR. FOSTER: Good morning. 13 What I mean by that is there is a construction 13 THE COURT: Thank you. 14 Whereupon, 14 phase where certainly there will be -- there will 15 be some -- some trips in and out of the site, but 15 KEVIN FOSTER, 16 when the County is looking at trip generation and 16 being first duly sworn or affirmed to testify to 17 how traffic, you know, will operate within a site, 17 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the 18 truth, was examined and testified as follows: 18 they're looking at, as I mentioned, the peak hours EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT 19 of what they consider to be a typical day. So it's 20 a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, while school is 20 BY MR. CIFERRI: 21 in session, sort of what would you see on a -- on a 21 Q Good morning. Can you state your name 22 regular -- regular one of those days. 22 and occupation for the record?

A For the record, it's Kevin Foster. I'm

25 and I'm a principal with Gutschick, Little & Weber,

24 a certified land planner and landscape architect,

And as you heard Mr. Zimmerman testify,

24 and as we've seen with other, in our experience,

25 with other solar facilities throughout the state,

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and our office is located at 3909 National Drive in	1 Diggs Dood So the property it sits besignly			
	1 Riggs Road. So the property, it sits basically 2 Northwest of Olivey in Montgomery County in the Ag			
	2 Northwest of Olney in Montgomery County in the Ag 3 Reserve, so it's zoned AR. It used to be zoned			
L	3 Reserve, so it's zoned AR. It used to be zoned 4 RDT. With the new zoning code, changed that to AR,			
. `	5 which is Ag Reserve Zone. And all of the 6 properties surrounding this property are also in			
6 A Yes. 7 Q And is that a accurate copy of your	7 the Ag Reserve zone. So it does not abut any			
8 professional resume?	8 residential properties any other residentially			
9 A Yes, it is.	9 zoned properties. Excuse me.			
10 Q Could you briefly describe your	10 The property itself is currently being			
11 professional experience as a land planner and	11 used as a tree farm. So the owner, you know, grows			
12 landscape architect?	12 trees on that farm that are then dug and either			
13 A I've been a land planner and landscape	13 planted or sold to to landowners. There's a			
14 architect working in the Baltimore Washington	14 stream that runs a stream and wetland area that			
15 region since 1986, and I have testified on multiple	15 runs parallel to Zion Road on the west side of the			
16 occasions in front of the Hearing Examiner in	16 property, and we'll look at that a little further			
17 Montgomery County for local map amendments, special	17 as we get into the get into the testimony, but			
18 exceptions and conditional uses.	18 the majority of the property is open with trees			
19 Q Thank you.	19 growing on it.			
20 MR. CIFERRI: I ask that Mr. Foster be	20 Q And the existing nursery use, is that			
21 qualified as an expert in land planning and	21 anticipated to continue?			
22 landscape architecture.	22 A For the this this use will only			
23 THE COURT: Admitted.	23 take up a portion of the property. You know, 12			
24 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.	24 acres out of the total excuse me total of			
25 Q Turning to and Mr. Foster, if there's	25 53.59 acres, we will only be taking up 12.6 of it			
38	40			
1 a point where you'd like to refer to a different	1 in total use area, so the rest of the property will			
2 exhibit or if you would like to direct, you know,	2 remain an actively growing tree farm.			
3 zooming in or changing pages, please feel free.	3 Q And are there any prior special			
4 A Sure.	4 exceptions or conditional uses on this property?			
5 Q Yeah. Could you walk us through the	5 A No, there are not.			
6 existing conditions to the property?	6 Q Okay. The adjoining properties, could			
7 A Sure.	7 you walk us through the existing uses of the			
8 MF. FOSTER: If you could pull up the	8 adjoining properties?			
9 I think the Staff Report would probably from	9 A Sure. So the north of the property			
10 Park and Planning, Page 6, I think would be a good	10 along Gregg Road, there are single family			
11 place to start.	11 residences on large lots, pretty much, along that			
12 BY MR. CIFERRI:	12 whole frontage along the northern property of Gregg			
13 Q Okay.	13 Road. On the eastern property line, along Riggs			
14 A It has a pretty good map on it.	14 Riggs, there's a very large farm, so there's open			
15 (Exhibit 6 was marked.)	15 fields adjacent to the site. South of the subject			
16 THE COURT: Yep.	16 property there's a a special exception use.			
17 MR. FOSTER: There we go.	17 It's for a landscape contractor, and they they			
18 MR. CIFERRI: Yeah.	18 also grow a number of trees on that property as			
19 A Thank you. So to orient the location of 20 the of the site, it's outlined in red in the	19 well. To the west of the property is a couple of 20 farms, a historic property, and a property that was			
21 middle of that photograph from Page 6 of the	21 just approved for a solar use as well. I think it			
22 Montgomery County Staff Report, and just to orient	22 was called Free Range Solar.			
23 you, to the left or east of the property is Zion	23 Q Okay. And based on your professional			
24 Road, to the north and northeast of the property is	24 experience, how would you define the character of			
25 Gregg Road, and to the east of the property is	25 the surrounding neighborhood?			
,				

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1	A	The	the	character	of this	this

- 2 surrounding neighborhood is predominantly
- 3 agricultural with -- with some residential -- large
- 4 lot residential uses, but, you know, as you're
- 5 really traveling or traversing these -- the roads
- 6 right around the site, the majority of the uses
- 7 tend to be agricultural.
- Q And again, in your -- basically, in your
- professional experience, is this proposal
- 10 harmonious with that character?
- 11 A Yes, it is.
- Q What is the applicable area Master plan
- 13 respective to this property?
- A This property is in the Olney Master 15 Plan.
- Q And have you reviewed the Olney Master
- 17 Plan with respect to -- with respect to this
- 18 property and the proposed use?
- 19 A Yes, I have.
- 20 Q And what are the relevant
- 21 recommendations respective to the use and property?
- A Well, this property is -- you know, the
- 23 only master plan is a very broad ranging master
- 24 plan from basically Olney all the way to the Howard
- 25 County line, so it -- it encompasses quite a

- 1 spaces strengthened by focusing on protection of
- water supply and sensitive natural resources. And
- we certainly did that -- we -- to protect all of
- the sensitive resources on this site. As we look
- further into the plans, we'll see where we put all
- of the wetlands and stream buffers and existing
- forest, you know, forest conservation easement to
- protect those -- those resources.
- There's also a section talking about
- 10 Northern Olney on Page 18 of the master plan, and
- 11 it states that, Agriculture and rural open space in
- 12 the west area of Georgia Avenue and the rural open
- 13 space in the east area are recommended -- are the
- 14 recommended primary land uses. Continued
- 15 stewardship and management of the agricultural
- 16 lands and agricultural production and open space
- 17 conservation programs will maintain and improve the
- 18 environmental health of this area.
- Q Thank you. And based on your knowledge,
- 20 experience and training, is this proposal in
- 21 substantial conformance with those master plan
- 22 recommendations?
- 23 A Yes, it is.
- 24 Q Are there any other master plans relevant
- 25 to this application?

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- 1 diverse range of developments. And the majority of
- 2 the master plan is really focused on -- around
- 3 Olney because in the Olney Master Plan, the
- 4 majority of the activity and the uses are down
- 5 there, but the area where the subject property is
- 6 located is called Northern Olney, and there's a
- 7 number of sections of the code that talk about this
- 8 in, not a great amount of detail, but they do talk
- 9 about it.
- 10 If we could probably start on Page
- 11 -- now I'm going to reference the Olney Master Plan
- 12 as I'm reading through certain sections of this.
- 13 THE COURT: Okay.
- 14 A On Page 15, it really talks about the
- 15 land use goals for the Olney Master Plan, and the
- 16 one that really relates to Northern Olney is
- 17 protecting the Patuxent watershed, including the
- 18 drinking water reservoir and agricultural and rural
- 19 open space.
- 20 So the majority of the recommendations in
- 21 the Olney Master Plan relate to protecting the ag
- 22 uses, protecting the existing residential out
- 23 there, and the drinking water supply. The same on
- 24 Page 16. It says, In Northern Olney, the original
- 25 concept of preserving agriculture and rural open

- A There is the Rustic Roads Master Plan, 1
- which is relevant to this application, since all
- three roads that abut the property are all now
- classified as Rustic Roads.
- Q And could you describe the circumstances
- of the existing rights of way and what the master
- plan recommends for those?
- 8 A Sure.
- MR. FOSTER: If we could go back to the
- 10 Page 6 out of this, that would be helpful.
- 11 Actually, the one on Page 7 might be a little
- 12 better, just because it's a little -- there we go.
- A So the subject property, again, is
- 14 outlined in -- in red. And when we first started
- 15 this project, Zion Road was listed as a Rustic Road
- 16 with a 70-foot right-of-way, Gregg Road was listed
- 17 as a secondary road with a 60-foot right-of-way,
- 18 and Riggs Road was listed as a Rustic Road with a
- 19 70-foot right-of-way. During the process of this
- 20 project, as we moved through the conceptual design,
- 21 and then filing of a -- a conditional use, the
- 22 Rustic Road's Master Plan was updated during that
- 23 time frame, and part of that update was to nominate
- 24 Gregg Road as a Rustic Road. So it is now a Rustic
- 25 Road with a 70-foot right-of-way and Riggs Road was

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1	upgraded to	an exceptional	Rustic Road, so it now
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- 2 has an 80-foot right-of-way. So those are the
- 3 current right-of-ways and how they changed during
- 4 the process.
- Q Okay. And are the plans consistent with
- 6 those recommendations?
- 7 A Yes, they are.
- Q Did the project Applicant meet with the
- 9 Rustic Roads Advisory Committee?
- 10 A Yes. Yes, we did. We did on two
- 11 locations, two -- we met with them twice to get
- 12 their recommendations, and they seemed to be very,
- 13 very supportive of it. One of, you know, their
- 14 original -- the original discussions were where was
- 15 our driveway access and could we use the driveway
- 16 access on Gregg Road. And we took a long time to
- 17 really examine that, but ended up coming to the
- 18 conclusion that Gregg Road didn't meet the fire
- 19 access standards required by Montgomery County, so
- 20 we couldn't use that as our main access, whereas
- 21 the existing conditions on Zion Road met all the
- 22 requirements of fire access.
- 23 So that was really dictating where
- 24 our access to the property had to be located, and
- 25 Rustic Roads Committee was happy with that.

- 1 They're really just concerned on if there's any
- 2 improvements along the road, that they're done in a
- 3 limited scale, and we talked about that and really
- 4 conveyed that our impact to Zion Road is going to
- 5 be minimal, at best.
- 6 Q And based on your knowledge, training
- 7 and experience, are -- are the plans in substantial
- 8 conformance with the Rustic Roads Functional Master
- 9 Plan recommendations?
- 10 A Yes. They are.
- 11 Q I'd like to turn to one other master
- 12 plan matter. Is this property located within the
- 13 Patuxent Primary Management Area?
- 14 A Yes, it is.
- 15 Q Okay. And what effect does that
- 16 designation have on the Applicant and the
- 17 application?
- 18 A Well, that is all part of the Patuxent
- 19 River Master Plan, and they basically have
- 20 designated any area within 660 feet of a tributary
- 21 and the Patuxent River is called a primary
- 22 management area, and there's a number of
- 23 recommendations that have been made and guidelines
- 24 for what is called the PMA, or the primary
- 25 management area, and there are a number of areas on

- 1 this site that are part of the primary management
- 2 area. And I think we have an Exhibit -- it might
 - have been --
- MR. CIFERRI: If we turn to Exhibit 15D,
- 5 I think that might show it clearly. D as -- D as in
- 6 dog. Yeah, there. Okay.
 - (Exhibit 15D was marked.)
- 8 MR. FOSTER: So this is an exhibit that
- 9 shows depiction of the subject property with the
- 10 three roads around it, and what's in blue are the
- 11 areas designated in the primary management area, or
- 12 660 feet within tributary, you know, closest to any
- 13 of the tributaries. What you can see in the
- 14 diagonal lines along the northern part of the --
- 15 northeastern part of the property, that is the
- 16 solar array itself, and you can see part of it does
- 17 sit within the primary management area.
- Now, the -- the biggest impact of the PMA
- 19 management is limiting the impervious area within
- 20 the PMA, and that is limited to 10 percent. So the
- 21 most you can have of impervious in the PMA is 10
- 22 percent and our property, or our project has
- 23 basically 1.5 percent impervious, and most of that
- 24 is the road and the pad for the electrical
- 25 equipment. The -- in reality, the solar arrays
- 46
 - 1 aren't really considered impervious because their 2 water runs off of them and then goes back down to
 - 3 the ground and is -- and is infiltrated into the
 - 4 ground between the panels. So none of that is
 - 5 really considered impervious, since that water off
 - 6 of the panels directly goes back into the ground.
 - 7 BY MR. CIFERRI:
 - 8 Q Thank you.
 - 9 MR. CIFERRI: Turning now to Exhibit 37.
 - 10 (Exhibit 37 was marked.)
 - 11 Q Kind of switching gear, was a copy of
 - 12 this application submitted to the Office of
 - 13 Agriculture?
 - 14 A Yes, it was.
 - 15 Q And did the Office of Agriculture make
 - 16 -- make any specific recommendations?
 - 17 A They -- right -- right on the -- there,
 - 18 they -- they stated that we were -- outside of any
 - 19 wetlands and buffers, we weren't stripping topsoil,
 - 20 we were minimizing grading and we were meeting the
 - 21 farming and agricultural activity requirements, so
 - 22 they were in favor of the project.
 - 23 Q Okay. And respective to the zoning
 - 24 ordinance criteria, to the best of your knowledge,
 - 25 throughout Montgomery County, are there solar

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51 collection facilities in excess of 1800 total acres? 1 acres of road dedication, and the area to remain in A There are not. agriculture was 37.52 acres, for a total of 12.60 3 MR. CIFERRI: Turning to Exhibit 26. acres in -- in the actual -- actual use. As I 4 (Exhibit 26 was marked.) said, again, it's in the AR zone and the existing 5 Q Did the Office of Agriculture opine on use was tree nurseries. that fact? There -- there is no density limit A Yes. They did write an email stating to for this type of use. There is a residential that fact, that there are not solar projects density unit limit of 1 lot per 25 acres, but there greater than 1800 acres in Montgomery County is not any density on -- density requirements for 10 currently. 10 the solar collection systems other than the MR. CIFERRI: I'd like to turn now to 11 11 coverage, which we talked about. The principal 12 the Conditional Use Plan, which is Exhibit 14 and 12 building setbacks are 50 feet from the -- any of 13 its sub parts. 13 the right-of-ways, which we complied to, and we are 14 14 going to have a fence around the perimeter of the (Exhibit 14 was marked.) 15 Q And Mr. Foster, I'll let you -- you 15 -- of the project. 16 know, pick which of the subparts we should be If you get specifically into Solar 16 17 looking at. But, generally, was that site plan 17 Collection Systems, which is it may be allowed as a 18 prepared by you or people under your supervision at 18 conditional use, there are a number of 19 your office? 19 requirements, obviously, that we have to meet. A Yes. The Conditional Use Site Plan was 20 One, the project is less than 2 megawatts in size, 21 prepared by Gutschick, Little & Weber --21 and Mr. Zimmerman has already testified to that. 2.2 Q And are you --22 It can't be on soils classified as -- as class --23 A -- under my direction. 23 category 1 or 2 by the United States Department of 24 Q And are you familiar with the 24 Agriculture. 25 requirements of Article 59-3 of the Zoning 25 MR. FOSTER: If you could zoom to the 50 52 1 Ordinance? 1 chart in the upper left-hand corner. Okay. 2 A Yes, I am. 2 A This is a soils chart that we put Q Could you please walk us through the together, and sometimes there is a little bit of 4 site plan proposal and how it conforms to the 4 confusion about soils classifications because the general requirements of Article 59-3? 5 typical soils classifications you see are what are A Sure. So I guess -- what would be the called the map units, which is on the left, and 6 7 best? 7 those are the hydrologic soil classification units, Q It'd probably be A or D. and they're -- they range through from Class 1 to, A Right. Let me just see if I had my 59-3 9 you know, like, Class 32, so there's many of them. 10 up here somewhere. 10 But what's talked about in the Zoning Code about --Q A has the table; D is the design. 11 they're talking about the soil use classifications, A Right. So Section 59-3 is the use --12 which is the -- the fifth column there. The use 13 covers the uses in use tables, and this falls under 13 classifications for soils classifies them on the --14 Solar Collection Systems. So if you could zoom in 14 what they're most useful for. And the prime 15 on the site data table down on the lower -- lower 15 agricultural soils are typically Class 1 and Class 16 right-hand corner. I'm just getting used to doing 16 2, so that's why it's prohibited that any solar 17 these things virtually as opposed to in person, so 17 array beyond Class 1 or Class 2 soils, because the 18 it's a little -- a little different sometimes. 18 -- the County wants to maintain those as THE COURT: There. 19 agricultural soils. A So our gross tract area was 53.95 acres 20 And the soils for this site were --21 with the right-of-way dedications that were 21 where we put the solar array were not Class 2 or 22 required. We had actually had to make right-of-way 22 Class 3, but were Class 3 and Class 4, and that's a 23 dedications on all of the existing roads, even 23 little bit why -- it's totally why the shape --

24 what's driving the shape of the solar array is that

25 it was a very odd shaped soils classification on

24 though our actual solar collection system only sat

25 on a -- a portion of the property. So we had 3.83

53	55
1 our site, so that's why we have that kind of, you	1 Q And based on your review of the project
2 know, odd shape to it; it's it's following the	2 and your training and experience, is the
3 soil's lines on the sites.	3 application compatible with the general
4 Q Thank you.	4 requirements of 59-3 and 59-6?
5 A Getting back into the other requirements,	5 A Yes, it is.
6 solar collection systems are prohibited on stream	6 Q Based on your knowledge, training, and
7 buffers, wetlands, and on slopes greater than 15	7 experience, and in your professional opinion, what,
8 percent. We took all of the wetlands and stream	8 if any, non-inherent adverse effects would this
9 buffers and put them in a forest conservation	9 application have on abutting properties?
10 easement, and there are no slopes greater than 15	10 A This property will have no non-inherent
11 percent on the site. We will not be scraping any	11 impacts to the abutting, surrounding properties.
12 soil, grading will be minimized, and the solar	12 Q As far as adequate public facilities are
13 collection system will be compliant with the	13 concerned, which of those criteria apply to a
14 state's net metering system and pollinator friendly	14 project of this nature?
15 designation as well.	15 A The the only criteria that apply to a
16 Q Thank you. Turning back to Article 59-6	16 project of this nature are really roads roads
17 and the general criteria there, are you familiar	17 and drainage. Roads, as Mr. Driban had testified,
18 with those criteria?	18 were adequate to serve the property. The
	19 stormwater management concept plan shows that we do
19 A Yes, I am.	
20 Q And turning to site access, how will	20 meet the drainage. You know, we are providing
21 site access be granted for this property?	21 adequate drainage and with the culvert studies
22 A The site access will be off of Zion Road	22 that we've done.
23 with a single driveway with a 25-foot excuse me,	23 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Turning to Exhibit
24 a 20-foot driveway leading back into the site.	24 14F as in Frank.
25 MR. CIFERRI: And if we could pull up	25 (Exhibit 14F was marked.)
54	56
1 Exhibit 16.	1 Q Are you familiar with the landscaping
2 (Exhibit 16 was marked.)	2 required and proposed for the project?
3 BY MR. CIFERRI:	3 A Yes, I am.
Q Does that fairly depict the site access	Q And could you walk us through the
5 for the property?	5 applicable requirements and how those are being met?
6 A Yes, it does, and that this is the	6 A Right. The for a solar project we're
7 approved Fire Access Plan. So it it shows the	7 required to provide screening for any any part
8 access coming into the property, having a fire	8 of the project that would be visible from a
9 compliant turnaround, and there's also a small	9 residence, and we're required to do that through
10 exhibit that shows we are within a mile of water	10 the screening requirements in Section 6.5.3 of the
11 supply along Zion Road.	11 Zoning Code, and that would be the a general
12 Q And probably sticking with this exhibit,	12 building or general with the general building.
13 are there any specific parking criteria for a solar	13 So we're required to provide a 30-foot landscape
14 collection facility?	14 buffer around the perimeter that's visible to any
15 A No; there's no specific parking required,	15 any residential properties, and that's what
16 and when the very rare maintenance truck comes out	16 we've provided, as shown on this exhibit.
17 there, it would park off to the side or in one of	17 THE COURT: And where are the
18 the turnaround legs of the driveway.	18 residences, from looking at the exhibit?
19 Q Is there any lighting associated with	MR. FOSTER: The the residences are
20 the project?	20 on the opposite side of Gregg Road to the north of
21 A There's no lighting associated.	21 the property and to the north northeast, you can
22 Q And you mentioned before fencing?	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	22 see the little squares that are shown on all those
23 A Yes. There will be a 7-foot agricultural	22 see the little squares that are shown on all those 23 adjacent properties.
23 A Yes. There will be a 7-toot agricultural 24 style fence around the perimeter of the solar	<u> </u>

	50
1 actually a a down in the lower left-hand	THE COURT: Just noting the 6A, 2B.
2 corner, a residence down there, and they're all	2 Those are the soil types?
3 currently screened by the existing vegetation.	
4 There's existing forests along Zion Road that	MR. FOSTER: Sorry, I I couldn't understand that. What was that?
5 provides the buffer to those.	5 THE COURT: On the plan, I see the
- myr covrm m 1	
6 THE COURT: Thank you. 7 BY MR. CIFERRI:	6 numbers 2B, 6A. I'm assuming those are soil types? 7 MR. FOSTER: Yes. Those are the
8 Q And the existing landscaping and	8 hydrologic soil groups.
	9 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. I
	10 Just wanted to confirm.
	11 MR. FOSTER: Yes.
11 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Turning to Exhibit 12 15.	12 BY MR. CIFERRI:
13 (Exhibit 15 was marked.) 14 Q And could you identify that? Could you	13 Q Was this forest conservation plan 14 reviewed by the Planning Board?
14 Q And could you identify that? Could you 15 identify Exhibit 15?	15 A It was.
16 A Exhibit 15 is the Forest Conservation 17 Plan.	16 Q And has it been approved?17 A Yes, it has been approved.
18 Q And were those prepared by you or under	 17 A Yes, it has been approved. 18 Q Was the approval were were there
1 1 1	1 **
19 your supervision?	19 any conditions to the approval?
20 A Yes, they were prepared under my	20 A Yes, there were were conditions to
21 supervision.	21 the approval and we'll we have some conditions
Q Could you describe for the Examiner the	22 to deal with prior to certification, some technical
23 proposal for compliance with the forest	23 clarifications, and then we also have to show the
24 conservation ordinance?	24 impacts to the culvert removal along Zion Road in
25 A Sure.	25 this plan as well.
MD FOSTED. Con you will yo 15 A?	60
1 MR. FOSTER: Can you pull up 15A?	1 Q Turning to some of the other related
THE COLDT. There is in	2
2 THE COURT: There it is.	2 zoning ordinance criteria, is there any proposal
3 MR. FOSTER: So 15A is the forest	3 for the removal of trees or landscaping in order to
3 MR. FOSTER: So 15A is the forest 4 conservation plan, and what what you're looking	3 for the removal of trees or landscaping in order to 4 allow for the installation of the solar array?
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	63
 1 are listed as threatened species, and they were 2 specific they gave us some specific 	1 A Yes, they were. 2 Q Okay. Okay. Was there a pre-submission
	3 community meeting held for this project?
1	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
6 Q Thank you. And I would like to touch on	6 technically, one required. But, yes, we did hold
7 community outreach for the project. I'm going to	7 one.
8 ask you about a series of exhibits just briefly.	8 Q And could you describe the participation
9 If you could identify Exhibit 7. Was the	9 at the pre-submission meeting?
10 (Exhibit 7 was marked.)	10 A We didn't really have anybody show up.
11 A The adjoining and confronting property	11 If I remember correctly
12 owner's list.	12 Q Was there
13 Q And was that prepared by your office?	13 A there were there were no
14 A Yes, it was.	14 participants.
15 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. And if we could go	Q Was there any other community outreach
16 to Exhibit 8.	16 as part of the project?
17 (Exhibit 8 was marked.)	17 A Yes. We did get some correspondence
18 Q And could you identify that?	18 from as part of a you know, process, we talked
19 A The list of civic community condominium	19 to a number of the neighbors on the opposite side
20 and HOA's registered at Park and Planning for this	20 of Zion Road when they were concerned about, you
21 property.	21 know, where the arrays were going to be and what
22 Q Was that also prepared by your office?	22 the impacts to Zion Road. And we met with them out
23 A Yes, it was.	23 onsite, and then we also had some phone calls and
24 MR. CIFERRI: Okay. Exhibit 9, please.	24 letters from, I think it was, the Patuxent River
25 (Exhibit 9 was marked.)	25 Association that concerned with the Patuxent
62	64
1 Q Do you identify that?	1 River water quality, and they seemed to be very
2 A That is the notice letter that was sent	2 happy with what we were proposing since we were,
3 out for the filing of a forest conservation plan.	3 you know, doing everything according to the
4 Q And to the best of your knowledge, was	4 regulations.
5 written notice mailed to the notice parties in	5 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you. Okay. I have
6 conformance with the zoning ordinance?	6
7 A Yes, it was.	6 7 THE COURT: Okay. Just one
7 A Yes, it was. 8 MR. CIFERRI: If we could turn to	6 7 THE COURT: Okay. Just one 8 MR. CIFERRI: no further questions.
7 A Yes, it was. 8 MR. CIFERRI: If we could turn to 9 Exhibit 10.	6 7 THE COURT: Okay. Just one 8 MR. CIFERRI: no further questions. 9 THE COURT: One quick one.
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THE COLIDT: Okay	67 1 BY MR. CIFERRI:
1 THE COURT: Okay. 2 MR. FOSTER: We use the exact same list.	
	Q Mr. Longfellow, did you or someone under
3 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.	your supervision perform a site distance evaluation
4 MR. CIFERRI: I have no further	4 for this project?
5 questions for Mr. Foster.	5 A Yes, we did.
6 THE COURT: I think Mr. Foster answered	6 MR. CIFERRI: If we could turn to
7 all of the questions that I had. Screening yep.	7 Exhibit 46.
8 I have no questions for you, Mr. Foster. Thank you.	8 (Exhibit 46 was marked.)
9 MR. FOSTER: Thank you.	9 Q Is that an accurate copy of the site
10 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you. I call next	10 distance evaluation that was prepared?
11 Tim Longfellow.	11 A Yes, it is.
12 THE COURT: Thank you.	12 Q Okay. And upon your review of site
13 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.	13 distance evaluation criteria, is this project in
14 Whereupon,	14 compliance with required site distances?
15 TIMOTHY LONGFELLOW,	15 A It it will be in compliance once we
16 being first duly sworn or affirmed to testify to	16 get into the applicable permit drawings. There is
17 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the	17 one tree that's noted in the comment sections that
18 truth, was examined and testified as follows:	18 needs to be removed, and then upon its removal
19 EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT	19 excuse me upon its removal, we'll have more than
20 BY MR. CIFERRI:	20 adequate sight distance.
21 Q Could you state your name and occupation	21 Q Thank you. Did you evaluate stormwater
22 for the record?	22 management for this project?
23 A Sure. Tim Timothy Longfellow. I'm a	23 A Yes, we did.
24 civil engineer registered in both Maryland and	MR. CIFERRI: If we could turn to
25 Virginia, and I've been with Gutschick, Little &	25 Exhibit 18.
66	68
1 Weber for 30 years in various capacities, currently	1 (Exhibit 18 was marked.)
2 as a principal.	2 Q Yeah. Page 1, is this a copy of the
3 Q Thank you.	3 plan that you prepared?
4 MR. CIFERRI: And turning to Exhibit 40.	4 A Yes, it is.
5 (Exhibit 40 was marked.)	5 Q And could you walk us through the plan
6 Q Is that an accurate depiction of your	6 that's proposed and whether it demonstrates
7 resume?	7 compliance with the applicable code criteria?
8 A Yes, it is.	8 A Sure. So, generally, as we approach
9 Q And have you been qualified as an expert	9 did you have something, Peter?
10 in civil engineering in the past?	10 Q No.
11 A Yes, I have. I've been qualified oh,	11 A Okay. Generally, as we approach each
12 go ahead.	12 project for stormwater management, we've got to do
13 Q Go no; go ahead.	13 an evaluation of both the existing conditions and
14 A I've been qualified in front of OZAH for	14 the proposed conditions and basically look at the
15 local map amendments, special exceptions, et	15 increase in any storm discharges based on the
16 cetera, as well as in some other adjoining	16 proposed development. In this case, we also had to
17 jurisdictions, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's	17 look at the MDE technical guidance that they
18 County and various jurisdictions throughout the	18 provide and how they address impervious areas as
19 state.	19 they relate to solar panels. Their technical
20 Q Thank you.	20 guidance I think it's Policy Number 8 that they
MR. CIFERRI: Based on his knowledge,	21 have establishes that the only impervious areas
22 training, and experience, I would ask to qualify	22 for solar projects is the support to the panels
23 Mr. Longfellow as an expert in civil engineering.	23 themselves, and then any driveways and equipment,
24 THE COURT: Admitted.	
	24 buildings, and things of that nature.
25 MR. CIFERRI: Thank you.	24 buildings, and things of that nature. 25 So when we evaluated that, there

69	71
1 was a fairly minimal increase in the impervious	Q Is that a copy of the analysis that was
2 area, and then we started to evaluate the different	2 prepared?
3 types of stormwater management practices that we	3 A Yes, it is.
4 might be able to undertake for projects like this	4 Q And could you walk through why a culvert
5 in the AR zone, and and other ag type practices.	5 analysis was necessary and and some of the
6 Generally, we have the opportunity to look at can	6 details of that analysis?
7 we get any sheet flow credits to conservation	7 A Sure. So whenever we're looking at
8 areas. As Mr. Foster pointed out earlier with the	8 proposed development plans, we have to, again,
9 creation of some of the forest conservation	9 assess the impact that that development may have on
10 easement, that was a great opportunity to do that.	10 downstream or surrounding properties excuse me
So on the second page of the stormwater	11 and in this case, you know, given the size of
12 concept plan and I think that's Exhibit	12 the drainage area and the extent of the
13 that's the one. So in on this plan, you've got	13 development, we knew that we needed to look at that
14 two insets. The inset on the right depicts the	14 culvert to be sure that it was safely conveying the
15 area that we looked at that would actually sheet	15 appropriate design storm. So you know, basically,
16 sheet flow through a portion of the solar panel	16 we identified that upfront and undertook that
17 array system, and that's outlined in red. On the	17 analysis throughout the process.
18 inset to the left, in green, we've highlighted	18 Q And what was the applicable standard
19 where those areas will actually sheet flow through	19 that needed to be met?
20 the conservation areas with a buffer width that	20 A So MCDOT establishes the standard for
21 range from 100 feet to about 240 feet or so, and	21 this type of road at a 25-year design storm.
22 that that sheet flow through the the	22 Q And based on your examination and your
23 conservation area is is a practice that's	
	23 professional opinion, what is the condition of the
24 accepted by MDE and Montgomery County for	24 existing culvert?
25 Stormwater Practices. So that is the extent of our	25 A Sure. The existing CMP culvert is is
70	72
1 stormwater management practice for this project.	1 in fair condition, but unfortunately it does not
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1 that occur?	1 going to
A Typically we get underway with those	2 THE COURT: Less than that?
3 types of design and construction plans once all the	MR. FOSTER: take that long.
4 entitlements have been secured. In this case, our	4 THE COURT: Okay.
5 clients asked us to to kind of get started on	5 MR. FOSTER: I think it'll it may be
6 that a little bit early as as it's an absolute	6 a one- to two-month design process, and maybe, you
7 necessity that it get replaced if the project moves	7 know, two- to four-month approval process, at worst.
8 forward.	8 THE COURT: Okay.
9 Q And have your recommendations been	9 MR. FOSTER: So yeah.
10 reviewed by the Planning Department, or DOT?	10 THE COURT: All right. Okay. I just
11 A Yes, they have.	11 always like to know for for my own education
12 Q And did you receive any feedback from	12 exactly how long these things take after the
13 those agencies?	13 decision is rendered.
14 A Yes. MCDOT issued a a a comment	MR. FOSTER: Sure.
15 letter, and, in there, they concurred with our	15 THE COURT: All right. Thank you so
16 conclusions, and, as such, Park and Planning	16 much. And I have no further questions.
17 adopted those same recommendations.	So if there's any closing arguments
18 Q Thank you.	18 or anything else you'd like to say?
MR. CIFERRI: I have no additional	MR. CIFERRI: Thank you. Just briefly,
20 questions for Mr. Longfellow.	20 we submit to the Hearing Examiners' recommendations
21 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Longfellow.	21 and resolution in this matter. I would I would
22 MR. LONGFELLOW: Thank you.	22 note that the testimony and documentation submitted
23 MR. CIFERRI: That concludes the	23 as part of the application do satisfy the
24 Applicant's testimony, unless there are any further	24 requirements under 59-3 and the applicable
25 questions from the Examiner.	25 requirements under 59-6, as well as the conformance
74	76
1 THE COURT: No. I think I think all	1 with the applicable master plan and functional
2 of my questions have been well, I early on,	2 master plan.
3 Mr. Zimmerman testified as to length of	It is a harmonious application that does
4 construction. As far as the process, once the	4 not alter the character of the surrounding
5 it you know, assuming conditional use is	5 neighborhood, and it is not in a in or
6 approved, what are we looking at as far as	6 neighboring a residential detached neighborhood,
7 application, process, stage, things that still have	7 zoned anyway. It is served by adequate public
8 yet to be done before work can actually start?	8 facilities, to the extent those are applicable to
9 MR. CIFERRI: I think let's see. I	9 the application, will not cause undue harm to the
10 think Mr. Foster is probably best suited to to	10 neighborhood as a result of non-inherent effects,
11 answer the question as to a permitting timeline.	11 and satisfies all the specific criteria for the
12 THE COURT: Right.	12 conditional use. Again, based on the testimony
MR. FOSTER: Once the conditional use is	13 today and the evidence in the record, we would ask
14 approved, we would then start all of the technical	14 for a for an approval from the Examiner.
15 design, stormwater management, sediment control and	15 THE COURT: Thank you. And I want to
16 whatever culvert plans that that need to be	16 thank all of you for participating today. This is
17 done. Those typically are, you know, probably a	17 our second Zoom hearing that we've had and any
18 several-month design process, and and then they	18 feedback you have, I I think it went fairly
19 have to be submitted to Montgomery County for	19 well. I think we'll be able to hear everything,
20 review and approval, and that is also a multiple	20 able to see everything. Is it a a I'll just
21 month process as well.	21 throw this out here. Do you guys prefer the option
THE COURT: So we're looking at nine	22 of I see a couple thumbs up, right?
23 months to a year before actual construction; is	23 MR. CIFERRI: Yes.
24 that	24 THE COURT: Right.
25 MR. FOSTER: No; I don't think it's	25 MR. CIFERRI: Two thumbs up.

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Conducted on De	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
THE COURT: Save you time, save you	79 1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER - NOTARY PUBLIC
2 money.	2 I, Brendon Cuenca, the officer before
3 MR. CIFERRI: We we had an	3 whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do
4 out-of-town witness and it was very helpful. Thank	4 hereby certify that any witness(es) in the
5 you.	5 foregoing proceedings were fully sworn; that the
6 THE COURT: All right. Excellent.	6 proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter
7 Well, the the goal is that all hearings moving	7 reduced to typewriting by a qualified
8 forward will be hybrid, so I think it might just be	8 transcriptionist; that said digital audio recording
9 a couple of us here in the hearing room going	9 of said proceedings are a true and accurate record
10 forward. All right. Excellent. Well, thank you.	10 to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability;
11 Thank you. All. And I just have a few things to	11 and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor
12 wrap up.	12 employed by any of the parties to this case and
13 All right. All exhibits I'm going to	13 have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its
14 admit all exhibits as they are identified, and we	14 outcome.
15 reviewed those earlier. The record will be held	15
16 open for 10 days for a transcript to be prepared by	16
17 our court reporter. We have our court reporter	17
18 here, so I think this might be his last time here.	18 BRENDON CUENCA, NOTARY PUBLIC
19 I think they can appear remotely too, I think, at	19 FOR THE STATE OF MARYLAND
20 this point. There's there's no reason to to	20 December 19, 2023
21 drag those poor guys in here.	21
So at this point, the record is closed	22
23 for all other documents and a decision will be	23
24 rendered within 30 days after the record is	24
25 finally closed. So we've got 10 days and then	25
78	80
1 another 30. I'll try to get it done as quickly as	1 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER
2 I can for you guys because I know you can't do	I, Karen M. Galvez, do hereby certify
3 anything until you get the final decision. So at	3 that this transcript was prepared from the digital
4 this point we are off the record, the record is	4 audio recording of the foregoing proceeding; that
5 closed, and I would like to thank everybody for	5 said proceedings were reduced to typewriting under
6 attending.	6 my supervision; that said transcript is a true and
7 (Off the record at 11:11 a.m.)	7 accurate record of the proceedings to the best of
8	8 my knowledge, skills, and ability; and that I am 9 neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by
10	10 any of the parties to the case and have no
11	11 interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.
12	12 Interest, imalicial of otherwise, in its outcome.
13	
14	13 Kan M. Salver
15	15 KAREN M. GALVEZ
16	16 PLANET DEPOS, LLC
17	17 December 19, 2023
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