

Q&As from Operations and Decommissioning Virtual Meeting - December 19, 2022

Some participants were unable to send questions during the online event and instead submitted them after via email. Here are those questions, with some light editing for clarity.

Q: Is there any financial impact (positive or negative) to the region in which the panels are located?

A: There will be an overall positive impact to the region in which the panels are located from a variety of sources.

- *Local Taxes – A PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreement will be negotiated with the towns, counties and school districts within the project footprint area. This agreement will put the tax onus directly with the project developer and not the landowner. The amount of the PILOT is not yet finalized, but is estimated to be more than \$8 million over the life of the project. This source of funding can help plan for future services in the host communities.*
- *Job creation – During the development and construction of the project, there is an ongoing investment in the community and need for goods and services. The development of the project is expected to take approximately 4-5 years where consulting services, hospitality services, etc. are required in the immediate area. The construction process is expected to create approximately 150 jobs and local hiring will be prioritized as well as sourcing local goods and services such as aggregate, fencing, etc.*
- *Local sponsorships – Partnerships with local organizations are developed in the project area and financial benefits such as sponsorships or donations are provided where appropriate. These relationships can also involve job training, event participation, facility tours, etc.*

Q: Where is the power going? What impact does this have on the overall grid?

A: The project will be connected to the New York State electrical grid and power will be provided to electricity users within the state. It is expected that the project will produce enough electricity over the course of a year to power the equivalent of over 30,000 homes.

Q: Aside from aesthetics, what is the number one complaint from residents?

A: Boralex receives a wide variety of questions and also positive feedback from interested stakeholders regarding the project. We strive to individually answer each comment that we receive and engage directly with concerned parties through one-on-one meetings or phone calls. We also work to deliver information to the public through the website, open houses, mailings and webinars such as this one.

Q: Are there misconceptions regarding health or safety?

Regarding health and safety, there are a number of misconceptions about solar projects and we invite you to contact us directly with your specific questions. We will address some of the more common misconceptions below:

Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF): Any device that uses or transmits electricity will create an electrical and magnetic field. Both types of fields decrease significantly over a short distance, so the space between homes and the proposed transmission line will be more than sufficient to have negligible EMF from the transmission line. Devices in homes such as your cell phones, toaster, coffee maker and vacuum cleaner produce a significantly higher EMF impact than anything experienced from the transmission line or solar project. EMF from electrical infrastructure has been studied over many years and no health

impacts have proven even with much higher exposure rates. You can learn more here:
<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/emf/index.cfm>

Ground water: Solar is not a contributor to water or soil contamination. Solar panels are encased and sealed and are entirely solid state, containing no liquids or other materials that can escape. We study the impacts of our project on groundwater to ensure the continued protection for all drinking water sources. A survey of all well locations is required in the immediate area to ensure we are aware of the locations of nearby wells to provide enough clearance during construction. In regards to soils, the solar project will actually allow the land to rest and rejuvenate itself and soils will be rebuilt with nutrients. The time that the land lies fallow gives the soil an opportunity to re-generate to ultimately be in better health when the project is decommissioned and agricultural activities re-start.

Q: What will you do for the many homeowners concerned about property values?

A: There have been many studies conducted to determine if there is a clear impact on property values as a result of renewable energy projects such as solar and wind installations. Property values are based on a myriad of factors and there is no clear indication that proximity to these projects is linked to property devaluation. Solar projects are a quiet and consistent land use that do not cause negative impacts to health and safety of the neighbors. It protects the land from being converted to other land uses such as higher density housing or other potentially louder or more obtrusive land uses. The project will increase the tax base in the community, potentially leading to improved municipal infrastructure and services. The participating landowners will see an increase in property value from their land lease revenue which can have an overall positive impact on land values in the area.

Q. What happens if the panels become obsolete due to tech advances?

A: The efficiency of solar photovoltaics will increase over time, as advances in solar technology continue to be made. The improved efficiency calculation will be weighed against the cost and impact to fully replace the existing project panels. Updates to state and local permits may be required. If a clear benefit is identified and an equipment upgrade is the best option, the landowners and the community will be consulted.

Q: Have any decisions been made as to the specific location of the transmission line? eg. which side of route 8 will it run on?

A: We do not yet have a final design for the transmission route. It will need to be reviewed by the Office of Renewable Energy Siting before we can confirm the route and exact siting.

Q: What will the setbacks be as it pertains to tree removal? Will all trees be removed or only those over a certain height?

A: Tree removal is avoided as a first approach in the design of the project. In some situations, trees may need to be removed for panel installation. If they are located within a proposed fenced area, trees will be removed. If the trees are located outside of the fence, some may be removed to reduce shading impacts on the panels and in that case, trees under a certain height may remain. The number of trees in certain locations may also increase as part of a visual impact minimization strategy that could include the planting of trees as vegetative screening to reduce the visibility of the project from certain viewpoints.

Q: Has any further consideration been given to connecting to the existing transmission lines on Walker Rd?

A: The draft transmission line route currently does not consider connecting to the existing transmission lines on Walker Road. However, the transmission line route has not been finalized.

Q: Who will be maintaining the transmission lines and the tree/vegetation growth underneath? Boralex, National Grid, or third party?

A: At this time, it has not been decided who will be maintaining the proposed transmission line.

Q: Regarding water contamination, does this take line maintenance into account for the transmission line? It's not uncommon for National Grid to spray under their lines and some of the chemicals they use have the ability to affect aquifers.

A: At this time, it has not been decided who will be maintaining the proposed transmission line. However, as operator of the project, Boralex will ensure that transmission line maintenance is done in a safe manner.