

December 5, 2023

1. Call to Order of the Randolph County Planning Board.

There was a meeting of the Randolph County Planning Board on December 5, 2023, at 6:30 PM in the 1909 Historic Courthouse Meeting Room, 145-C Worth St, Asheboro, NC. Chairman Pell called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Pell thanked former Planning Board member Barry Bunting for his service on the Planning Board.

Bunting said it had been his honor and privilege to serve on the Board, and he thanked the Board members for helping him understand often complex zoning issues.

Pell asked if any Board members would like to say anything to Bunting. Vaughan said that Bunting would be missed by the Board. Beeson expressed his thanks for Bunting and stated that they had been friends for many years before Bunting joined the Planning Board. Cable stated that he thought Bunting had done a great job and hated to see him leave the Planning Board. Austin said that he would miss the support of Bunting.

2. Roll call of the Board members.

The County Planning staff completed the roll call of the members of the Board as they arrived to the meeting. Reid Pell, John Cable, Melinda Vaughan, Reggie Beeson, Ken Austin, Brandon Hedrick were present. Kemp Davis was absent. County Planning Director Tonya Caddle and County Attorney Ben Morgan were also present, along with County Planning staff members Kayla Brown, David Harris, Kim Heinzer, Tim Mangum, and Eric Martin.

3. Reorganization of the Board.

Caddle opened the floor for nominations for Planning Board Chair.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, with a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to elect Reid Pell Chair of the Planning Board for a period of one year.

Caddle then opened the floor for nominations for Planning Board Vice-Chair.

On the motion of Austin, seconded by Cable, with a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to elect Kemp Davis Vice-Chair of the Planning Board for a period of one year.

4. Consent Agenda:

- Approval of agenda for the December 5, 2023, Planning Board meeting.

- Approval of the minutes from the October 26, 2023, and November 7, 2023, Planning Board meetings.

Pell called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

On motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, the Board voted 7-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

5. Conflict of Interest

- Are there any Conflicts of Interest or *ex parte* communication that should be disclosed?

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest on any of the cases before the Planning Board tonight.

- If there is a Conflict of Interest, the Board must vote to allow the member with the Conflict of Interest to not participate in the hearing of the specific case where the Conflict of Interest has been identified.

Austin stated that he has a Conflict of Interest on the Old Liberty Solar, LLC, rezoning request. Pell stated that the Planning Board would vote to recuse Austin before hearing the request of Old Liberty Solar, LLC.

6. Old Business.

There was no old business for the Planning Board to consider.

Caddle stated that the applicant for the rezoning request for New Life Homes requested that the public hearing be postponed and the request will not be heard tonight.

7. New Business.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST #2023-00002821

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Quasi-judicial Hearing on the request by **AUSTIN ROBERTS**, Sophia, NC, and their request to obtain a Special Use Permit at 2720 Devie Canoy Dr, Back Creek Township, Tax ID #7724954859, 21.49 acres, *RA - Residential Agricultural District*. It is the desire of the applicant to obtain a Special Use Permit to specifically allow obtaining a Federal Firearms License for the sale and manufacturing of firearms at the owner's existing residence as per the site plan.

Caddle presented the first case of the night along with site plans and pictures of the site and surrounding properties.

Pell asked for anyone in favor of the request to address the Planning Board,

Austin Roberts, 2720 Devie Canoy Dr, Sophia, rose to address the Planning Board after being sworn in by Morgan. Roberts stated that he would like to have a small business for firearms sales and that the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives requires him to have a Federal Firearms License and the *Randolph County Unified Development Ordinance* requires him to obtain a Special Use Permit. Roberts stated that he will buy and sell firearms and will handle the transfer of ownership and there would be no manufacturing on the site other than adding small parts to existing firearms. Roberts said that all sales would be internet-based and customers would come to his residence by appointment only and that there would not be a firing range on the site.

Pell asked if there were questions from the Board members.

Cable asked if Roberts had any type of security system and how he planned to store the firearms. Roberts stated that he has an alarm system on his residence and multiple cameras around the property along with a gate at his driveway to limit access to his property and that the property is entirely fenced. Roberts also stated that he has an industrial-type safe on the site that he would use to store firearms but that he also plans to not have any inventory on-site for very long.

Austin asked Roberts if there would be any signage and Roberts responded that there would be no signs posted.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in favor of this request who would like to speak. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

Cable stated that the Planning Board has heard enough of these types of cases before and that the applicant answered all of the questions up front by stating that the site will not be open to the public, and there will be no signs or test firing.

On the motion of Austin, seconded by Beeson, with a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to approve the request with the motions contained in the Planning Board packet.

REZONING REQUEST #2023-00002995

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request by **OLD LIBERTY SOLAR, LLC**, Durham, NC, and their request to rezone 388.68-acres on Whites Memorial Rd, Franklinville Township, Tax ID #7774905395, 7784000854, 7784112105, 7784215160, 7784412108, 7784306023, 7783295229, 7783187376, 7783288668 and 7783387254, Secondary Growth Area, from

RA - Residential Agricultural District to RIO-CD - Rural Industrial Overlay - Conditional District. The proposed Conditional Zoning District would specifically allow a 44-megawatt ground-mounted utility-scale photovoltaic solar farm and battery energy storage system used to produce renewable energy as per the site plan.

Caddle presented the next case of the night along with site plans and pictures of the site and surrounding properties.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Hedrick, with a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to recuse Ken Austin from participating in the request by Old Liberty Solar, LLC, due to an identified Conflict of Interest.

Tom Terrell, Attorney with Fox Rothschild, LLC, Greensboro, rose to address the Board and said that the applicant, Renewable Energy Services, RES, is one of the oldest solar developers in North Carolina and that they are a family-owned business. Terrell stated that RES tries to work with neighbors to let them know what the company is planning, and the company tries to respond to any comments and concerns raised by the neighbors. Terrell says that RES usually sends out a five to six-page letter to property owners in the area and conducts neighborhood information meetings to hear their concerns. Terrell asked for adjoining property owners from the community to stand and three people stood. Terrell said that, based on the new rules from the State of North Carolina and Duke Energy that were enacted in 2017, this is a small solar farm. Terrell briefly described the requirements that Duke Energy has in place to determine if they want to support the project.

Matt Delafield, 5315 Highgate Dr, Suite 202, Durham, rose to address the Planning Board and stated that he is the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Old Liberty Solar, LLC, which is also part of RES, and then presented a PowerPoint. (See Exhibit #1 for the PowerPoint presentation.)

Delafield talked about the project overview, specifics, and conformity with the *Randolph County Growth Management Plan*. He went on to describe how the project started in May 2023, how the 44 megawatts would be enough power to supply approximately 5,500 average-sized homes and how the site *may* also include battery storage, but the battery storage would be at the discretion of Duke Energy.

Delafield then pointed out specific items on the site plans and told how many of the decisions shown on the site plan were made and most were made to benefit the neighbors. He also described how the current application is for 388.68 acres but the area inside the fence that may be used could be around 250 acres pending the final design and engineering processes are completed. Delafield also went into detail regarding how the proposal exceeded the requirements of the *Randolph County Unified Development Ordinance* in areas such as property boundaries and setbacks. Delafield also stated that of the entire site, there is approximately 400 feet of road

frontage and that is along Carl Allred Rd.

Delafield presented a slide showing the site design and stated that the site would be surrounded by an eight-foot woven or six-foot chain link fence around the perimeter of the project and that the fencing would be along the Duke Energy rights-of-way according to Duke Energy's requirements. Delafield also covered the remainder of the information contained on the slide before talking about the vegetative buffer and the landscaping plan. Delafield also showed pictures of how the trees in the landscaping plan would look after one year versus five years of growth.

Delafield then talked about how the site will have minimal impact on the community and that all the scientific research shows no impact on property values along with not producing noise, light, odor, vibration, or excessive traffic, and how the plan complies with the *Randolph County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance*.

Delafield then moved to a discussion on the operation and maintenance plan along with the decommissioning plan as shown in the exhibit.

Delafield then moved to the community benefits that this site could provide, such as approximately \$2.15 million in net new tax revenue for the County over forty years, as opposed to the tax revenue that would be generated if the solar farm was not built on the site. He also mentioned that construction would take approximately eighteen to twenty-four months, and they would work with local contractors and supplies when possible.

Delafield then covered how this request is in general conformity with the *Randolph County Growth Management Plan* using a slide that showed details of the conformity.

Pell asked if there were any questions from the Board members.

Caddle stated that the fence must be eight feet according to the *Randolph County Unified Development Ordinance*.

Beeson stated that he did have a comment on buffers and how that for five months out of the year, the deciduous trees would provide no buffer and asked if taller evergreen trees could be used. Delafield said that the plan would comply with the *Randolph County Unified Development Ordinance* buffer requirements.

Vaughan asked about the maintenance of buffers and their plans to maintain the trees if they die or need to be replaced. Delafield said that the proposed maintenance plan does cover the care of the buffer and Terrell provided a copy of the maintenance plan for the Board to review. (See Exhibit #2 for the maintenance plan.)

Cable asked about a service road on the site and Delafield responded that the

service road would be in the fenced areas.

Cable thanked RES for their community outreach program and said that the aesthetics of the site was a major concern for him, along with the safety concerns expressed by the community as well as operational safety. Delafield stated that the operations and maintenance plan covers all of these questions and that they keep a check on the site and all equipment is subject to a multi-year check. Cable said that he just wanted to make sure that the residents' concerns were addressed now and in the future.

Cable asked if RES would help train the local fire department and Delafield said they would be happy to do that and work with the fire departments to ensure that they are well-trained and know how to address any potential problems at the site.

Cable stated that health and safety is a big issue and that the Planning Board has approved several solar farms over the years, but this is the largest and that the Planning Board is trying to render decisions based on the health and safety of residents. Delafield stated that national studies and data show no issues and that any battery storage containers have fire suppression built into the container.

Hedrick stated that he appreciated the health and safety report as it was not required by the *Randolph County Unified Development Ordinance*. Beeson asked a question about the assumed inflation rate on the decommissioning report. Delafield said that the report was for illustration purposes only, and it would be reviewed, and the bond would be updated every twelve months.

Vaughan stated that she just wanted to make sure that the buffers and landscaping would be preserved for perpetuity.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in support of the rezoning request.

Tim Marshall stated that he was not opposed to the site but did have questions and that he was proud of the Planning Board for holding the developers to the maintenance plan. Marshall did question the values in the report and wondered how the fire departments and the County would be responsible for containing fires and the cost associated with this development. Marshall concluded by saying that Planning and Zoning have to ensure safety, and he wants to make sure the community has a say after this request is approved.

Caddle stated that this request is for a Conditional District and the only thing that can happen on the property is what is allowed by the Conditional District and the site plan. If the developer wants to do something different, they must come back to the Planning Board to have the conditions amended.

Marshall stated that he has a problem with Duke Energy making the final decision and Caddle reminded him that only what is on the approved site plan on the

Conditional District permit is what can only happen on the site.

Pell asked if anyone else was in favor of this request.

Cody Allred, 526 Worthville St, Randleman, told the Planning Board that he owns property on Carl Allred Rd and anything that he can do to make it better for my family and Randolph County, he wanted to do that. C. Allred stated that he hears the safety concerns, and he takes pride in the fire department that services this area, he said the applicant team has gone above and beyond to answer questions and that this is the type of project that Randolph County needs for its future growth.

Pell asked if anyone else was in favor of the request.

Alex Williamson, 2259 Whites Memorial Rd, Franklinville, told the Planning Board that he will be able to see it out his back door and that he is not totally in support or opposed to the request. Williamson did state that he did not want the batteries near his house in case of an explosion and the possible release of fumes but that we would rather see chicken houses on the property instead of solar panels. Williamson asked about hours of operation and how many trucks and equipment will be brought to the site during construction.

Pell asked if anyone else was in favor of the request. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request.

Andy Glass, 2375 Carl Allred Rd, Franklinville, rose to address the Planning Board and stated that he was in opposition to the request. A. Glass stated that he will be living in the middle of the project, and he thinks that the project will block off his access to his machine shop. A. Glass talked about the runoff that is already impacting his property and is concerned about additional runoff from the solar panels. A. Clay also talked about his love of nature and how he loves to see the wildlife around his house. A. Clay stated that he did not know anything about a neighborhood information meeting or of the request until he received a letter from the County Planning Department two weeks ago. He talked about the risks of lithium-ion batteries exploding and giving off toxic fumes and that there are not enough people at the fire department to warn the residents if the batteries do explode. A. Clay also talked about reports of solar panels causing ambient temperature to rise by ten degrees. A. Clay concluded his remarks by saying the four people in the community have already listed their houses for sale and how many more people will try to leave the area due to the solar farm?

Pell asked if there were any questions from the Planning Board for A. Glass.

Gary Glass, 2444 Cal Allred Rd, Franklinville, addressed the Board and said that he has lived at this site for seventy-two years, and he also did not get a letter about the proposed solar farm until two weeks ago. Pell asked G. Glass if he saw the signs posted and G. Glass said the sign was up on the property. G. Glass asked if the

proposed buffers would be on the solar farm property or his property and Morgan said the buffers would be on the solar farm property.

Pell stated that Morgan was writing down questions from the opposition, and he would ask questions to the applicant.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in opposition that wanted to speak. Hearing none, Pell asked the applicants if they wanted to address the concerns and questions from the opposition.

Terrell said that Tommy Cleveland, 4141 Laurel Hills Rd, Raleigh, would be able to address questions regarding the batteries and heat. Terrell said that Cleveland has a master's degree in mechanical engineering from NC State and that he was a student at NC State when solar energy was just getting started. Terrell said that to the best of his knowledge, no solar farms in North Carolina have ever burned, and they had checked their mailing lists and A. Glass and G. Glass were both on the list of people they notified about the neighborhood meetings.

Terrell stated that, as a matter of law, a right-of-way neither any access can be blocked and everything for the solar farm will be within the boundary of the property they are leasing.

Cleveland stated that he was a lead writer for reports from NC State in 2017 and that he helped prepare the health and safety report. Cleveland said that municipalities and urban areas have things called *heat islands*, **but** there are no issues with solar farms and the ground is still vegetated, and the panels do not store heat. Cleveland referenced studies that have been done that show that solar panels do not increase heat outside the site.

Cleveland then addressed the fire concerns and stated that there are multiple sites across the State and more across the United States and there are no known issues and that so little of the material in the panels is not flammable and that grass can burn but will not ignite the solar panels.

Cleveland then talked about the batteries and said that there are no concerns as the codes and standards have caught up with the production and there have been very few fires at the sites.

Morgan asked what the batteries are for and how they would be used. Cleveland said that the battery facility and solar are two different facilities and the batteries are there to support energy in the system when the sun is not shining. Cleveland stated that the batteries are UL tested, listed, and set up according to the UL and manufacturer specifications and that no special equipment is needed, and that there is no risk to health and public safety.

Pell asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

Terrell said that the runoff from the site would be absorbed into the ground and would not create any impervious surface.

Delafield rose to address the stormwater questions and described that the company must follow State and local guidelines. Delafield described how they drill holes over the site to approximately twenty feet deep and examine the soil to determine the amount of water that the soil can absorb based on the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, guidelines. Based on those results, the engineers design the mitigation measures and retention ponds. Delafield stated that there are usually nineteen to twenty feet between each row of panels, and that the natural grass is allowed to grow on the site and the site and the plans are reviewed by multiple agencies before construction begins. Once the solar farm is operational, everything is monitored by Duke Energy and Duke Energy makes all the operations decisions.-

Cable asked if the solar panels are fixed and Delafield described the panels as being on a single axle and the panels move to follow the sun, making the panels more efficient and the motor is self-contained and the position of the panels can be changed due to changes in the weather.

Cable asked which North Carolina agency regulates solar farms and Delafield stated that the North Carolina Utilities Commission, NCUC, reviews everything regarding the project and performs the final review before construction takes place.

Morgan asked Delafield to estimate for the Planning Board how often an employee would be at the site once the solar farm becomes operational. Delafield stated that the frequency depends on many factors, such as the time of year, issues with the site, etc., Delafield talked about the prescribed scheduled maintenance and remote monitoring making it more infrequent for employees to visit the site. Delafield said employees could be at the site once or twice a month during the mowing season and none during the winter, as it depends on how well the panels are performing.

Cable asked about the construction process and if there would be any cranes or heavy equipment on the site. Delafield said there could be equipment working there, but it would not be at 2:00 am as was previously mentioned. Delafield said that they are willing to add a condition of the work hours during construction, which would be from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Delafield last stated that all driveway connects as well as signers have to be approved by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Hedrick asked a question regarding the batteries and read from the safety report where it says the "real risk is smoke but not fire." Hedrick asked how the location of the proposed batteries is regulated and Delafield said they are not regulated by NCUC but based on the location of where the solar farm would connect to the power lines running over the property, and they are usually nineteen to twenty feet apart.

Hedrick commended RES on their commitment to the public and their willingness to

work with the public and this could impact future requests for solar farms.

Cable asked about the distance between the battery containers and what should be done if a battery catches on fire. Delafield said that the best data shows that letting the fire burn itself out, as the containers have cooling and fire suppression equipment and, most of the time, the sensors pick up a problem before it happens.

Cleveland said that all of what Delafield said is correct and that some of the newer models can be closer than 15 ft but have to be tested and approved.

Pell asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak

Scott Fleming, 2021 Carl Allred Rd, Franklinville, stated that this was his first Planning Board meeting that he has attended and is impressed and is neither for nor against the request. Fleming said that it would be good to have a history of the equipment that will be used to make sure it is safe.

Terrell stated that all the panels have a safety rating and that Tier I is the best panel made, and the applicants offered to add only Tier I panels to be used at the site as part of the conditions for the rezoning request.

A. Glass stated that he had two questions for the applicants, and they were where the battery will go after they are no longer usable and what will happen to the solar panels at the end of the project.

Delafield stated the average life of the battery is fifteen to twenty years and disposal is included in the decommissioning plan. Delafield said that the batteries will go to a recycling facility that will properly dispose of the batteries. Delafield said the panels can last from thirty to forty years and many times they are repurposed in developing nations to allow them to produce cheap, clean energy. Everything on the site can be recycled, and that process is monitored by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, EPA.

Pell asked if there were any more questions from the Board members. Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

Pell stated that he has been a part of several rezonings for solar farms over the years, but this one is different and unique since only Duke Energy will know what will eventually be developed on this site.

Beeson said that this was the largest request by scale and thanked the applicants for their thorough presentation.

Hedrick said that he wanted to commend the Planning Board and County Planning staff for all of their work to get this request to this point. Hedrick stated that he felt the request meets the definition of *Rural Industrial Overlay* that is found in the *Randolph*

County Unified Development Ordinance and this is the first time the *Northeast Randolph County Growth Management Plan* has been referenced, and it shows that the plans are working.

Cable stated that the presentation was very informative, and it appears that the technology is only getting better and better based on regulators. Cable stated that the citizens asked many good questions from citizens and that the Planning Board tries to listen to the questions and gain information to make good decisions and that safety is always the main concern. Cable said that the company has done everything to be safe and that this land can be reclaimed when the solar farm is no longer in production.

The application for property rezoning was amended to include the construction hours from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm and that only Tier I panels be used in the project.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Hedrick, with a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to approve the request with the motions contained in the Planning Board packet.

ROAD RENAMING REQUEST - ROAD #1

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road from the intersection of Old Red Cross Rd and a new State road to the intersection of Shiloh Rd as **MICHAEL LEE LN**. Randolph County intends to name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the first road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

Cable asked who decided on the proposed road names. Caddle stated that County staff comes up with the suggestions and does check various lists to ensure that the road name is okay to use.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Beeson, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road named Michael Lee Ln.

ROAD RENAMING REQUEST - ROAD #2

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road from the intersection of Old Red Cross Rd to the intersection of Shiloh Rd as **OLD RED CROSS RD**. Randolph County intends to name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the next road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road names Old Red Cross Rd.

ROAD NAMING REQUEST - ROAD #3

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road from the intersection of Julian Airport Rd to the end as **PIERCE DENNY RD** as requested by the residents along the road. Randolph County intends to name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the next road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board.

David Allen, 6411 Shiloh Rd, Liberty, rose to address the Board. Allen stated that a resident along the road, Gene Pierce, had contacted him and asked that the road be named for the family that had lived on this road for years along with the family of the person that built the road and that is how the name of Pierce Denny Rd was developed.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in favor of this request that wished to speak. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would

like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Beeson, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road named Pierce Denny Rd.

ROAD NAMING REQUEST - ROAD #4

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road from the intersection of Dogwood Way to the end as **CAMELA WAY**. Randolph County intends to name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the next road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board.

Alfred and Camela Crutchfield, 5536 Julian Airport Rd, Liberty, rose to address the Board and he told the Board of all of the problems he has now due to the megasite. Mr. Crutchfield said that he would like the road to be named for his wife since everything else has been taken away from him by the State of North Carolina.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in favor of this request that wished to speak. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road named Camela Way.

ROAD NAMING REQUEST - ROAD #5

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road going into the west side of the Greensboro – Randolph Megasite as **DOGWOOD WAY** as requested by Toyota Battery Manufacturing. Randolph County intends to

name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the next road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road. Caddle explained that County staff had discovered earlier in the day that the proposed name of Dogwood Way is a duplicate road name in the Staley Postal District. Caddle stated that she had been in contact with Toyota Battery Manufacturing and they are fine with changing the road name to Dogwood Ln.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road named Dogwood Ln.

ROAD NAMING REQUEST - ROAD #6

The Randolph County Planning Board will hold a duly published and notified Legislative Hearing on the request to name a new road going into the south side of the Greensboro – Randolph Megasite as **CAROLINA LILY RD** as requested by Toyota Battery Manufacturing. Randolph County intends to name this road to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of citizens around and working on the megasite facility.

Caddle presented the next road naming request of the night along with site plans showing the surrounding area and the proposed new road.

Pell opened the public hearing and asked for anyone in support of this road naming request to address the Planning Board.

David Allen, 6411 Shiloh Rd, Liberty, rose to address the Board. Allen stated Dodson Lake had been in this area for many years and has been used by residents since 1948 after it was built by his grandfather. Allen requested that the new road be named Dodson Lake Rd in honor of his grandfather and as a way to remember Dodson Lake.

Pell asked if there was anyone else in favor of this request that wished to speak. Hearing none, Pell asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request who would like to address the Planning Board.

Hearing none, Pell closed the public hearing.

On the motion of Cable, seconded by Austin, with a vote of 7-0, the Board voted to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the road naming request as presented in the Planning Board packet be approved and the road named Dodson Lake Rd.

8. Update from the Planning Director

Caddle reminded the Planning Board that the January 9, 2024, Planning Board meeting would be in Meeting Room A, Randolph County Office Building, 725 McDowell Rd, Asheboro, NC 27205, at 6:00 p.m.

Cable thanked the County Planning staff for all of their hard work.

9. Adjournment.

There being no further business for the Planning Board, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

At 9:32 p.m. on motion of Beeson, seconded by Austin, the Board voted 7-0 to adjourn with 33 citizens present.

Chairman

Clerk to the Board

**Approved by the Randolph County Planning Board
February 6, 2024**

Exhibit #1**Old Liberty Solar LLC**

Randolph County, NC

Application for Rezoning



1

AGENDA

- Project Overview
- Specifics
- General Conformity with Randolph County Growth Management Plan



2

Project Overview

Old Liberty Solar

- Originated in May, 2023
- Approximately 44 MW, enough to power 5,500+ homes
- May incorporate battery storage, at Duke Energy's discretion
- Estimated to create more than **\$2.3M** in net new tax revenue for Randolph County (Years 1-40)
- Requesting zoning change from Residential Agricultural (RA) to Rural Industrial Overlay (RIO) Zoning District
- Complies the County's Growth Management Plan



3

Development Status

Summary

- Completed numerous environmental / engineering studies
- Hosted two public information meetings
 - Invited all property owners adjacent to and near the project site

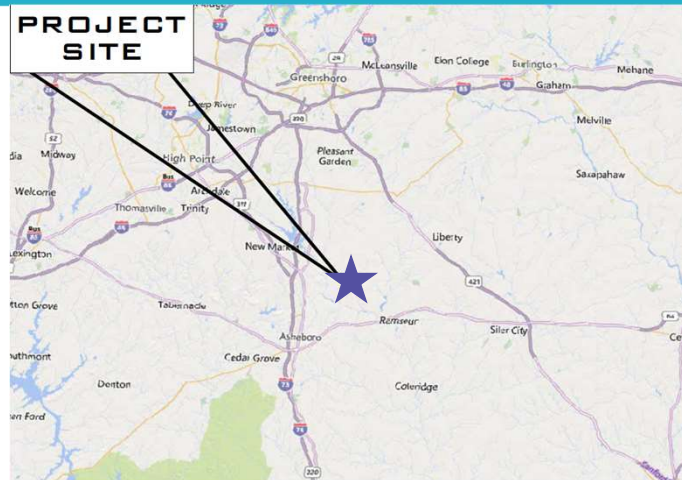
Moving Forward

- Project was submitted into the Duke Energy 2023 Solar Procurement
 - Shortlisted projects announced in January 2024; **Winners announced in May 2024**
 - If selected, estimated 2026 construction start; subject to schedule provided by Duke
- Final engineering / design to commence after notice of bid award under Procurement



4

Vicinity Map



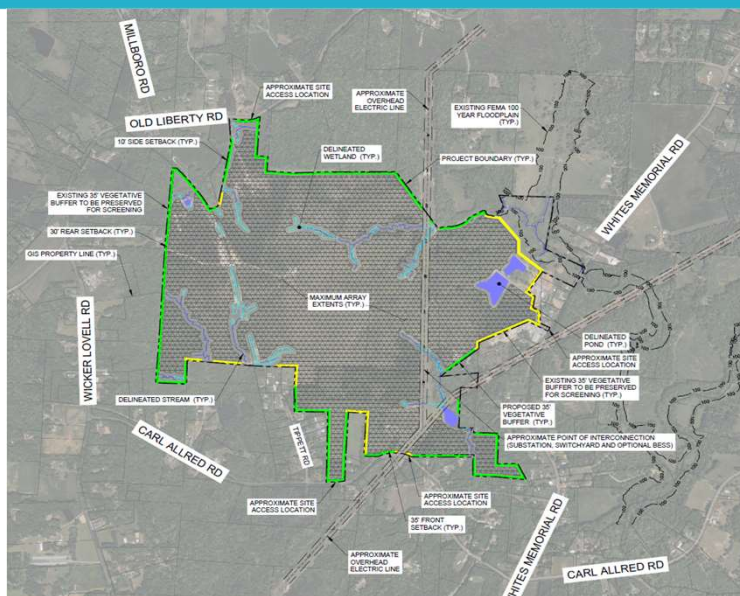
Located within the Franklinville Township, approximately 8 miles from the City of Asheboro, 27.5 miles from downtown Greensboro
 map not to scale

5

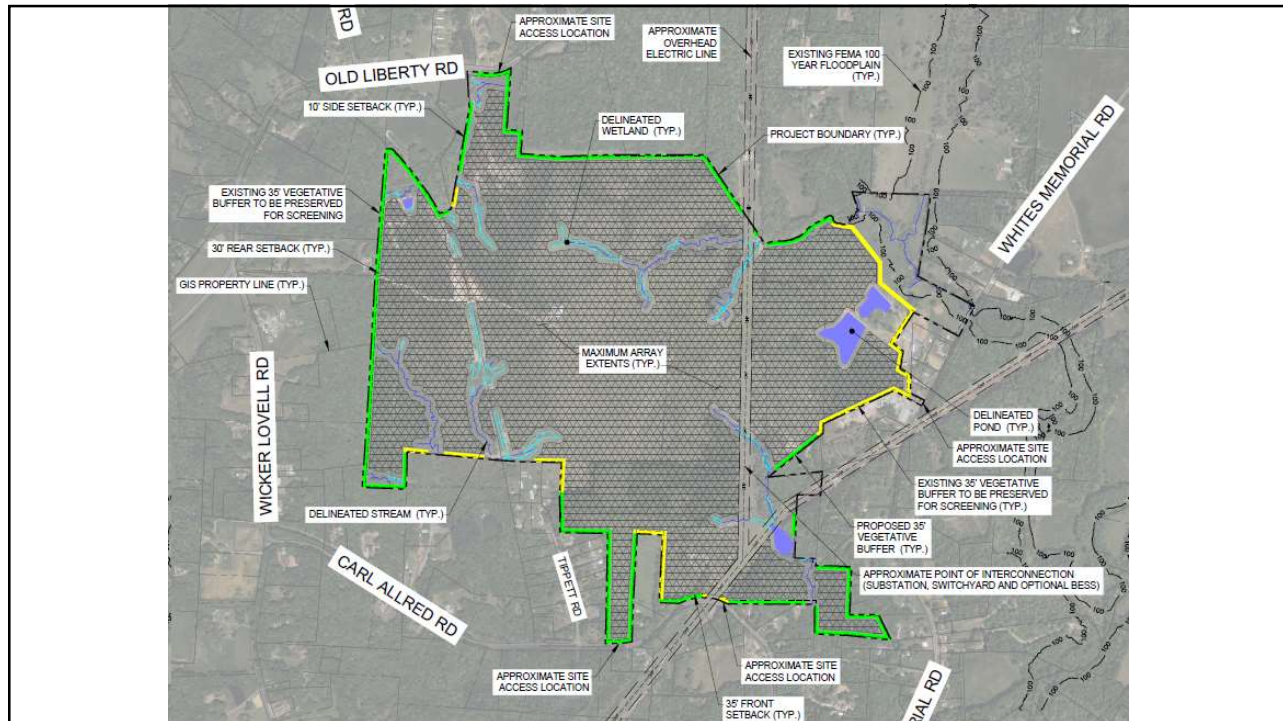
Site Map

TOTAL PROJECT AREA
 =
± 387 ACRES, pending final design

AREA INSIDE THE FENCE
 =
± 250 ACRES, pending final design



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Site Design

Project Setbacks

Meets or exceeds all Randolph County Design Requirements:

- **50 ft.** around entire project boundary
 - Randolph County requires: Front: 35 ft., Side: 10 ft., Rear: 30 ft.
- 30 ft. setback from delineated wetlands and streams
 - Will avoid impacts to wetlands and floodplains
 - No planted vegetation within the wetlands and wetland setback areas; will preserve natural vegetation within those areas
- Minimal road frontage:
 - Only frontage is approximately 400 ft. of frontage along Carl Allred Road



Total project road frontage outlined in red

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Site Design

Facility Design Components

- 8 ft. woven or 6 ft. chain link fence along the perimeter of the project site
 - Fencing to be installed along Duke Energy right of ways in accordance with Duke Energy's policies
- Native ground cover on 90% of the site
 - Pollinator habitats to be implemented on either side of each access point
- Maximum panel ground coverage of 50% of the project array area (excluding setbacks/buffers), no less than 30% of total project area will be considered Open Space (per ordinance)
- Internal network of service roads for maintenance and emergency vehicles
 - Will submit a final site plan to the Randolph County Fire Marshall for approval prior to construction
- Equipment on-site will not exceed 20 ft. in height (excluding POI)
- No planned permanent security lighting

Stormwater:

- Will submit a complete Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan to Randolph County prior to obtaining building and electrical permits

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Site Design

Project Vegetative Buffers

- Will maintain a Level III Buffer
 - 35 ft. wide
 - Planted vegetation consists of 2 staggered rows of fast-growing evergreen trees & 1 row of mixed vegetation including evergreen trees, shrubs, canopy trees, under-story trees
 - Excludes wetland and wetland setback areas

Landscape Plan:

- 35 ft. buffer along project boundary
- Will supplement with planted vegetation where understory foliage is insufficient
 - Emphasis will be placed on utilizing existing vegetation, wherever possible, to expedite effectiveness of visual screening.

5-Year Growth Landscape Buffer
Renderings



100 ft. Section at 5-Year Growth

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Site Design

1-YEAR GROWTH



3-YEAR GROWTH



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Minimal Impact

Old Liberty Solar will be a low impact project:

- Property Value Analysis shows no measurable impact on nearby property values
- No noise, light, odor, vibration or traffic created by solar farm
- Complies with Randolph County Floodplain Damage Prevention Ordinance
- Use of vegetative screening helps protect viewshed



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O&M + Decommissioning

Operations + Maintenance

- 24/7 remote monitoring
- 5-6 mows per year during the growing season
- Regular inspections on all electrical and mechanical components of the facility

Decommissioning

- Decommissioning plan submitted to Randolph County
- Required to post a financial surety to ensure the equipment is removed after facility's usable life
 - Financial security retained by County to cover the cost of the decommissioning requirements



Sample equipment inspection

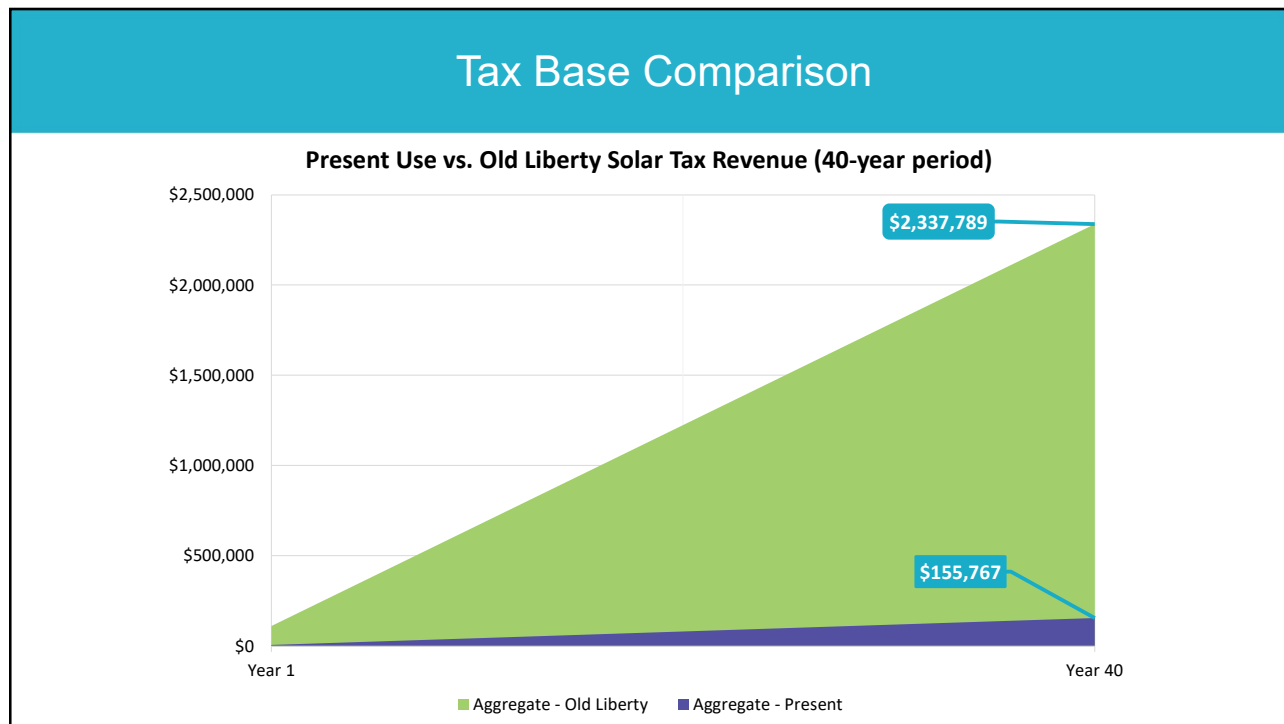
13

Community Benefits

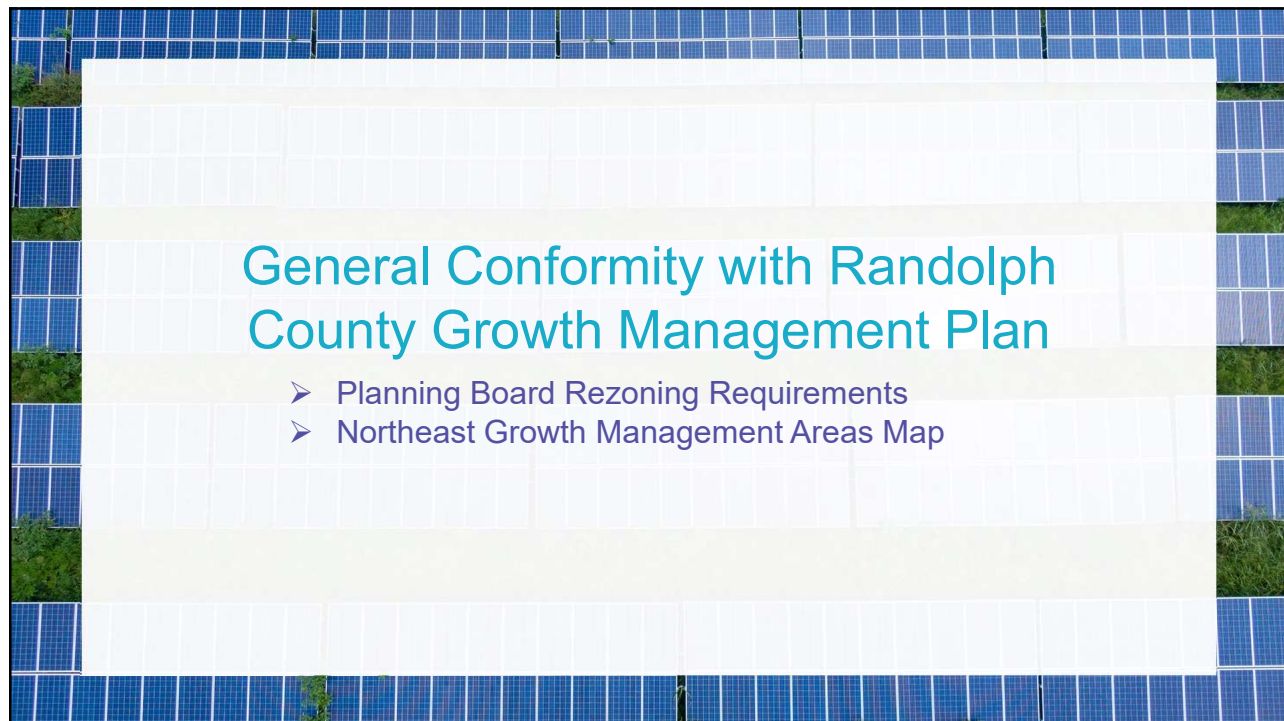
A **substantial** benefit to the Randolph community

- Approximately **\$2.15M** in net new tax revenue for Randolph County (40-year period)
 - **\$2.3M** (Old Liberty Solar) vs. **\$156k** (Status Quo)
 - **Y1: \$111k** (Old Liberty Solar) vs. **\$4,894** (Status Quo)
- **Construction:**
 - 18-24 months construction period
 - Approximately 150 construction workers
 - Will work with Randolph County EDC and County Chamber to utilize local contractors and suppliers wherever possible.
- No demand on tax-funded County services

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General Conformity with Growth Management Plan

Planning Board Requirements for Property Rezoning:



The request is consistent with the adopted Randolph County Growth Management Plan:

- Located within Randolph County's Secondary Growth Area
 - Utilizes buffering between solar use and residential areas
 - Mixed land uses



The request is reasonable and in the public interest:

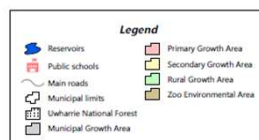
- Will be built in accordance with North Carolina and Randolph County building codes, using UL approved equipment
- Facility will not injure the value of adjoining or abutting properties
- \$1.4M in annual public health benefit from Old Liberty Solar (\$43M in 30 years), per EPA
- Anticipated to generate 1-2 vehicle trips per month once the facility is in operation

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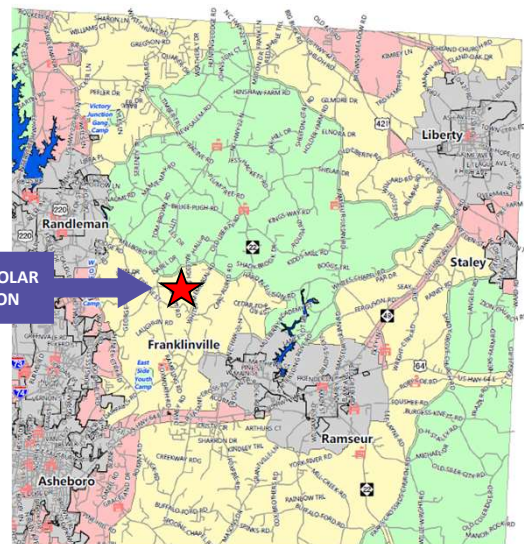
General Conformity with Growth Management Plan

Northeast Randolph County Growth Management Areas Map:

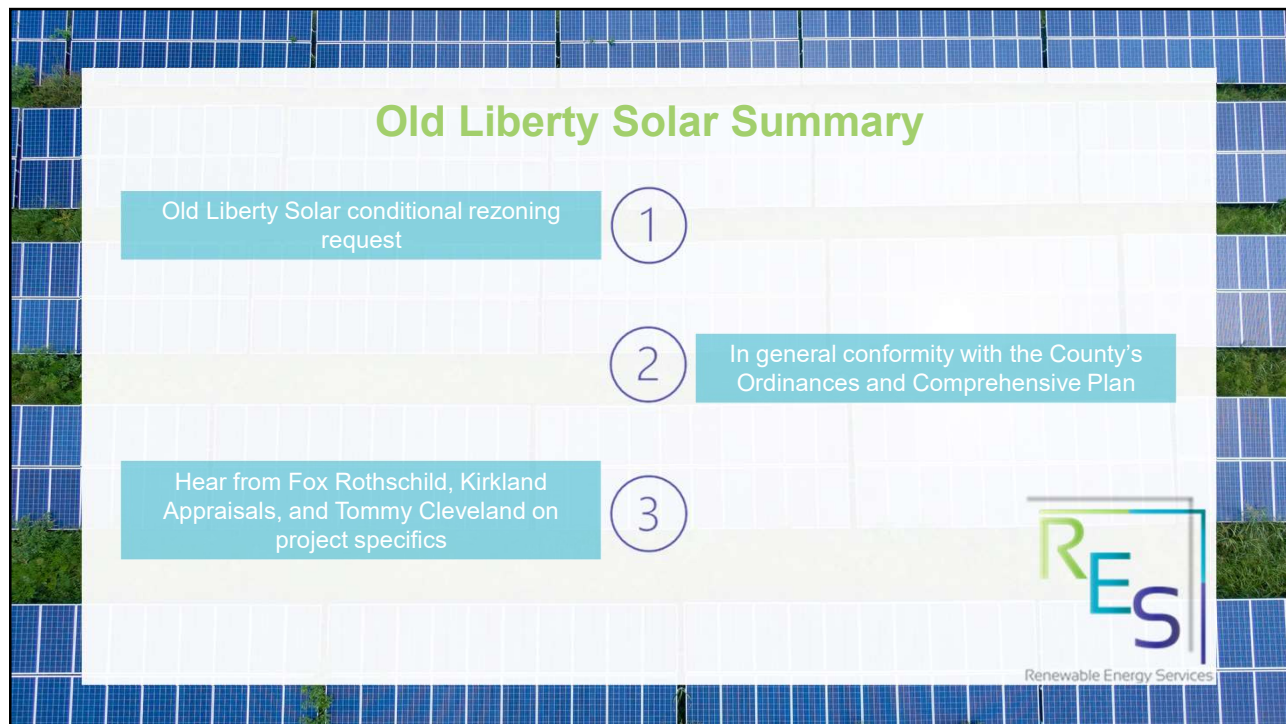
- Located within the Secondary Growth Area of Randolph County's identified growth management areas
- Outside of primary growth areas
- Outside of the municipal growth areas



OLD LIBERTY SOLAR
SITE LOCATION



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Proposed Operations and Maintenance Plan
Old Liberty Solar LLC
Randolph County, North Carolina

Contact Information

For all non-emergency correspondence during the operation of the solar farm, parties should direct inquiries to the following Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Provider:

Company: TBD
Attention: TBD
Phone: TBD
Email: TBD
Address: TBD

Maintenance Services

During the operational life of the Old Liberty Solar project, the Operations and Maintenance Provider shall provide services at the approximated frequency outlined below, although the exact scope is subject to revision, pursuant to the final Operations and Maintenance contract executed by Old Liberty Solar with the O&M Provider at the time of commercial operation. It is expected that the O&M Provider shall make every effort to note items of concern outside of the scope of scheduled visits, inspecting, and assessing items that may be problematic. For the avoidance of doubt, any mention of reports or notifications shall be directed from the O&M Provider to the owner of Old Liberty Solar, and not to the County, unless obligated to do so by County, State, or Federal regulations.

Item	Service	Service Description	Frequency
1. Monitoring, Reporting, Inventory			
1.1	Daily Monitoring	Monitor inverter and meter output data for recordkeeping and to identify issues	Daily
1.2	Monthly Reporting	Provide monthly operating report for the project that may include a summary of the following: operations, weather data, project performance, any environmental or site disturbances, safety/accident reports, maintenance and inspection reports, any proposed maintenance for the upcoming month.	Monthly
1.3	Annual Reporting	Provide annual output/performance, maintenance, and inspection reports for the project's preceding operational year.	Annually
1.4	Incident and Maintenance Reporting	Provide a written report of any event involving unplanned services, personnel injury occurring on site, or any material damage to the project.	No later than five (5) business days after the occurrence, or immediately for

			OSHA recordable events, but no later than 24 hours.
1.5	Security Incident Reporting	Notify facility owner following O&M Provider receiving information indicating a security issue on site.	Immediately, but no later than 24 hours.
1.6	Spare Parts	Storage and maintenance of replacement equipment for the facility.	As Needed
2. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Monitoring, Reporting, Inventory			
2.1	Battery Cabinet Chiller	Check coolant quality.	Every 3 Months
2.2	BESS Block Noises	Check for abnormal noise during operation.	Monthly
2.3	BESS Block Alarm	Check cabinet front LED warnings/PCS HMI readings.	Monthly
2.4	BESS Block FSS	Check control panel FSS battery voltage.	Twice per Year
2.5	BESS Block Batteries	Balance batteries. Monitor daily, recalibrate at three weeks	Daily
2.6	BESS BCP and Site Controller UPS	Check batteries.	Every 3 Months
2.7	BESS FSS Controls	Check the function of the fire suppression devices. Additional checks performed, as needed, by contracted local service provider.	Annually
2.8	BESS Block	Check the grounding connections	Every 3 Months
2.9	Spare Parts	Check spare parts inventory level (A 3-month supply of main spare parts inventory is typical for BESS)	Every 3 Months
3.0	BESS Nameplates	Check for legibility	Annually
3. Site/Land Inspection and Maintenance			
3.1	Vegetation Management	Maintain vegetation, remove debris, and other general landscaping for all property within the fenced area as well all property immediately surrounding the fence, as required by local ordinances or project conditions.	As Needed, with typical 4-5x per Year
3.2	Ground Inspection	Inspect project acreage for erosion, runoff, depressions, or other concerns. Inspect all drainage systems (culverts, basins, etc) and ensure they are functioning and free of debris that would prevent water from flowing unimpeded.	Twice per Year

3.3	Perimeter and Fence Inspection	Inspect all fencing for possible damage, intrusion, vandalism, and theft, as well as overgrowth of nearby vegetation. Inspect signage to ensure all originally installed signs are securely attached and legible	Twice per Year
3.4	Road Inspection	Inspect all roads for damage caused by erosion or severe weather.	Twice per Year
3.5	Security Inspection	Inspect the entire facility for signs of vandalism or other security related issues.	Twice per Year
4. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Maintenance			
4.1	Battery Cabinet Chiller	Use air gun to clean the condenser and air inlets.	Every 3 Months
4.2	Site Controller HVAC	Clean air filter.	Every 3 Months
4.3	BESS Block Signage	Check safety signage and arc flash stickers for wear and tear, replace if necessary.	Every 3 Months
4.4	PCS Air Filters	Check PCS air filters. Clean or replace filters. Note: Some environments may require more frequent servicing and frequency will be updated, as needed, during year 1.	Every 3 Months
4.5	PCS/ BCP/ Torque Check	Check the torque marks on all PCS/ BCP wiring connections. Tighten as needed.	Annually
4.6	BESS Torque Check	Check the torque marks on all BESS cabinet busbars and other wiring connections. Tighten as needed.	Annually
4.7	BESS Fire Suppression System Controls	Replace backup batteries.	Every 3 Years
4.8	BESS Fire Suppression System	Replace powder cannisters.	Every 10 Years
5. DC-Side System Inspection			
5.1	Racking Inspection	Inspect all racking, racking mounts, racking fasteners, actuators, motors, joints and conduiting affixed to racking to confirm proper operation, as well as for any signs of damage, corrosion, or instability. If issues are identified, perform maintenance in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.	Annually
5.2	Racking Grounding	Measure and record grounding continuity between module, rack, and grounding conductor on one racking structure per enclosure.	Annually

5.3	Module Physical Inspection	Visually inspect 20% sampling of modules for soiling, breakage, delamination, and discoloring. The sample area shall systematically rotate each year so that the whole facility is inspected every 5 years. Inspections may be done on foot or by aerial visual analysis.	Annually
5.4	Broken Module Replacement	If broken modules have previously been identified or are identified at the time of routine inspection, O&M Provider will replace them with new modules at the sole expense of the facility owner.	As Needed
5.5	Module IR	Perform aerial infrared inspection of all solar modules to identify irregularities.	Annually
5.6	Module Electrical Inspection	Inspect underside of module arrays for properly secured conductors, home run splitters, and wire management or chafing concerns.	Annually
5.7	Insulation Testing	Perform insulation resistance testing on conductors, if issues suspected.	As needed
5.8	Module Degradation Testing	Permanently identify 5% of benchmark strings and IV Curve, trace those strings to gauge module degradation.	Annually
5.9	Wire Inspection	Visually inspect wiring for damage or exposed conductors.	Twice per Year
5.10	Combiner Box and Enclosure Inspections	Electrical and mechanical inspection of combiner boxes and associated disconnects. Visually inspect bonding bushings and grounding, door seals, conduit sealant. Inspect interior and exterior of all enclosures for signs of damage, water intrusion, corrosion, and correct signage. Check for wire damage especially at entrance/exit locations, terminal corrosion, any discoloration, and inspect fuses for proper functionality. Remove pest debris as needed.	Twice per Year
5.11	Combiner Box and Enclosure Torque Inspections	Confirm and correct terminal torque settings for both sides of all fuse holders, grounded terminal bar, grounding bar, PV output circuit, and DC disconnects. Re-torque, as needed.	Annually
5.12	IR Enclosure Inspection	Perform infrared thermal inspection of all terminations and current arresting devices in accordance with NETA-ATS Section 9.4.	Annually
6. AC-Side System Inspection			
6.1	Inverter Inspection	Perform routine maintenance work on all inverters. Maintenance shall be conducted in accordance with manufacturer's recommended	As outlined by manufacturer

		schedule and as dictated by any warranty requirements.	
6.2	Inverter Enclosure Inspection	Check all enclosures for loose or broken connections and for evidence of localized heating or water ingress. Check door seals, conduit bushings, and conduit sealant for integrity. If issues are identified, re-seal, correct, or otherwise repair	Annually
6.3	Inverter Air Filters and Transformer Heat Sinks	Inspect all air filters for each inverter and heat sinks. If necessary, clean and/or replace.	As outlined by manufacturer
6.4	Inverter IR Inspection	Perform infrared thermal inspection of all power generation terminations at each inverter in accordance with NETA-ATS Section 9.4 as PPE allows.	Annually
6.5	Inverter Cooling Fans	Inspect inverter cooling fans for proper operation	Annually
6.6	Inverter Comms Test	Verify HMI is operating correctly, and record phase input voltage	Annually
6.7	Inverter Fault	Record and clear all faults on inverter	Annually, or as needed
6.8	Inverter Signage Inspection	Visually inspect equipment and ensure all labels and safety instructions are affixed and legible.	Annually
6.9	Inverter Termination Inspection	Visually inspect all electrical termination fasteners for proper torque per existing torque marks. Re-torque or repair, if needed.	Annually
6.10	Transformer OEM Maintenance	Visually inspect, clean, and perform preventative maintenance, as needed, on all transformers as specified by manufacturer.	Annually
6.11	General Transformer Inspection	Inspect inside primary and secondary side of ground mounted transformer enclosures for signs of overheating, oil leakage, or pests.	Annually
6.12	Transformer Oil Monitoring	Record oil level, current and max pressure, and current and max temperature of transformer oil. Also, confirm proper operation of load break oil immersed rotary switch.	Annually
6.13	Inverter and Transformer Pad	Inspect pad is cleaned and free of cracks, erosion, or other structural damage.	Annually
6.14	AC Disconnect	Inspect all latches and seals on enclosure of disconnect to ensure it functions correctly. Visually inspect terminations and confirm	Annually

		terminal torque settings. Check for evidence of arcing.	
6.15	MV Isolation Devices	Check all grid isolation devices (GOAB, Recloser, Overhead Cutouts) for proper function	Twice per Year
6.16	Recloser Inspection	Inspect recloser and meter enclosures for moisture, re-seal if necessary. Record and confirm proper recloser setpoints per utility's requested settings.	Twice per Year
6.17	MV IR Inspection	Perform infrared thermal imaging of all MV system components and identify any irregularities.	Annually
6.18	Switchgear Preventative Maintenance	Conduct switchgear preventative maintenance in compliance with manufacturer's guidelines.	Annually
7. Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Inspection			
7.1	BESS Block – Battery cabinets BCP and PCS Inspection	Inspect outsides of containers.	Every 3 Months
7.2	BESS Block – Battery cabinets BCP cabinets and PCS Inspection	Inspect interior and clean BESS Block inside containers.	Twice per Year
7.3	BESS Block Interior Inspection	Inspect doors on BESS Block (BESS, BCP, PCS). Check the latches, they should open and close properly. Inspect containers for door seals and clean if water present or if dirty.	Every 3 Months
8. DAS/SCADA Inspection			
8.1	General DAS Inspection	Perform monitoring system maintenance per manufacturer's suggested schedule. Verify attachment and general orientation of pyranometers and module temperature sensors, as well as check MET station and verify functionality of back-up power supply.	Twice per Year
8.2	Pyranometers	Clean pyranometer dome with an approved cloth and inspect connections.	Each site visit
8.3	Pyranometer Calibration	Provider to work with facility owner to calibrate pyranometer as per manufacturer's specifications.	As Specified by Manufacturer

8.4	Data/Instrument Accuracy and Communication Verification	Test MET station sensors (GHI and POA pyranometers, ambient temperature, back of each module sensor, anemometer, meter, and inverter communication).	Annually
8.5	Data Loggers and Comms	Inspect facility's data loggers and communication devices.	Twice per Year
9. Testing			
9.1	IV Curve String Testing or Module Level Thermal Audit	Test IV curve on all strings or thermal audit on all modules	Annually
9.2	Transformer Oil Testing	Sample transformer oil and test in accordance with nationally recognized testing standards and methods.	Once every 2 Years
9.3	Point-to-Point Testing	Inspect a randomly selected sample of combiner boxes (roughly 5-10%) and modules, checking the grounding for wear, corrosion, connection strength, and point-to-point resistance between modules, rack, and EGC. All locations and resistances shall be documented. Identify any resistance readings above 0.5 ohms.	Annually
10. Substation			
10.1	Substation Troubleshooting	Perform troubleshooting at the project collection substation for alarms, events of power loss / communication. Provide diagnostic summary based on logged plant data, relay event files, tracing wire connections, or findings from other testing equipment.	Ongoing
10.2	Substation HV	Monitor HV equipment. Utilize HV switching and grounding to isolate components for troubleshooting and failed component replacement.	Ongoing
10.3	Substation OEM Required Inspections	Complete the full visual/mechanical/electrical inspections and tests as recommended by ANSI/NETA and the OEM owner manuals per the respective intervals including but not limited to Generator Step-Up transformer, Switchgear, Circuit Breakers, Disconnect Switches, Metering, Capacitor Banks as applicable, Protective Relays, CTs/PTs, Control House, Station Power, and Substation Grounding.	Annually, or at manufacturer's recommended frequency