STATE OF ILLINOIS)
)SS
COUNTY OF LEE)

In the Matter of the Petition

of

Steward Creek Solar, LLC

Lee County, Illinois

Testimony of Witnesses
Produced, Sworn and
Examined on this 20th day
of October, A.D., 2020,
before the Lee County
Zoning Board of Appeals

Present:

Mike Pratt
Gene Bothe
Craig Buhrow
Glen Hughes
Rex Meyer (via Zoom)
Bruce Forster, Chairman

Alice Henkel, Secretary
Dee Duffy, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Honorable Judge Timothy Slavin, Facilitator

APPEARANCES:

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Counsel for the Applicant.

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Witness: MIKE LEHR (cont'd)
(Appearing via Zoom)

Witness: ANDREW LINES
(Appearing via Zoom)

EXHIBITS

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JUDGE SLAVIN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back to the Old Lee County Courthouse Main Courtroom on the Third Floor.

Calling out of recess Lee County Petition Number 20 P 1555, Steward Creek Solar, LLC's, request for a Special Use Permit to construct a solar energy system in portions of Alto and Willow Creek Township.

For the record, present this evening of note are the Chairman of the ZBA, Mr. Forster, ZBA Members Buhrow, Bothe, Pratt, Hughes. I do not see -- unless I'm not craning my neck very well, I do not see Mr. Meyer.

Okay. The wonderful Zoning Officer, Dee Duffy, is present, as is the astute State's Attorney, Mr. Boonstra, and Ms. Kennedy for the Petitioner, along with some of the Petitioner's agents.

Zach, from the Lee County IT Department is present, as is Ms. Henkel. Our long-suffering court reporter is with us. One, two, three -- four interested parties at this point appear. That makes the population of this room 4, 7, 8, 10, 14, 17, 18 -- I think 21 people present,

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which conforms with the governor's mandate. Who knows, pretty soon we may be shut down entirely, but we'll see.

There are no people, correct, in either the first floor lobby or the back jury room; is that correct, Ms. Duffy?

MS. DUFFY: (Nods head.)

JUDGE SLAVIN: For those listening, obviously if you're listening on Zoom you already know this, but if you happen to be listening on YouTube, the Zoom meeting ID remains 91539239154, and the password is 209840.

As to YouTube, you go -- you can watch us by going to www.youtube.com, and in the search bar type in "Lee County IL" -- I-L, for Illinois -- "Zoning Board of Appeals," all written out. No need to be concerned with upper or lower case letters. Then there should be a list of dates. Select the date you want, today is the 20th of October, and whala.

Anybody needing technical assistance, feel free to call for that technical assistance, 815.973.3449.

All right. That brings us up to speed.

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When we left off, before calling the last recess, Ms. Kennedy, you had a witness on the stand, Mr. Lehr, and she had finished direct examination, and we were about to begin cross-examination of Mr. Lehr. I see Mr. Lehr on the Zoom.

Mr. Boonstra, questions of Mr. Lehr?

MR. BOONSTRA: No questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Ms. Duffy, how about you, questions?

MS. DUFFY: No, I don't.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Members of the ZBA. Mr. Forster, questions of Mr. Lehr?

MR. FORSTER: No.

JUDGE SLAVIN: How about you, Mr. Buhrow?

MR. BUHROW: No.

JUDGE SLAVIN: How about you, Mr. Bothe?

MR. BOTHE: No.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Pratt?

MR. PRATT: Yes.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Sure.

And, Mr. Lehr, make sure you tell us if you can't hear. I am sure you will, but. . .

MR. LEHR: Yes, I can hear you very well

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right now.

JUDGE SLAVIN: You can hear me because I'm swallowing the microphone, but it's tough.

MR. LEHR: Can you hear me okay?

JUDGE SLAVIN: Wonderful.

MR. LEHR: Okay.

MIKE LEHR (via Zoom),

having been previously duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION

BY MR. PRATT:

Q. Mr. Lehr, are you going to -- do you design and position where the panels will be? Is this part of your responsibility?

A. No. My -- that comes from the EPC contractor. The way the process works is, I will help put together the construction plan, as we discussed last night, and then the EPC contractor will design the project and then install -- buy the material and install the project.

Q. EBC?

A. EPC. I'm sorry. It's an engineer, procure and construct-type contract.

Q. So who does design -- they have an engineer

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that positions the panels?
A. Yes. Depending on the contractor you get, they -- some of them have design people inhouse. If not, they would subcontract that out.
Q. So how will they get power from the -- say, the north project to the collection point without going through nonparticipating owners or parcels?
A. So the way the solar project will work is, the DC power that will come off the panel will go to an inverter. That will change it to AC power. The AC power would be routed underground up to the substation, where the main power transformer is. So all the power from the entire site, the north, central, and south portions, will have underground power cables that will go up to the substation. That's where they tie into the interconnection point on the grid.
Q. But surely they will have to pass through nonparticipating parcels with them underground cables?
A. If they do, there would have to be easements put in place to allow that.
Q. So what about the tile that they -- you know,

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if they're on a non- -- the tile guy talked about everything on the project. Now we're talking about nonparticipating parcels. You know, the tile are not discovered there, so is that your responsibility or somebody else's?

A. I can't speak directly to that. That would come from the owners. My guess would be, if they did hit tile as they were going through the easement -- I would assume before you went through the easement, that would be mapped, just like the project site. So you would know ahead of time if you hit a tile, and you would move that drain tile so you can pass through that easement.

But if they did hit an easement (sic), I would let the owners respond to that, but I assume they would fix that, repair that tile.

Q. What percentage of the 5,000 acres will actually have panels on it?

A. I believe the site is actually a little bigger than 5,000 acres. I believe the -- or at least the land that's allocated to this. But the 5,000 acres, minus the setbacks, you know, the County requirement setbacks, would pretty much

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all be used for the -- put the solar panels in. So percentage-wise, it would be 98, 97 percent.

MR. PRATT: Okay. No further questions.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Thank you.

I think we have run through everybody. Interested party -- oh, Mr. Hughes. Thank you. I have got to start going boom, boom, because I --

MR. HUGHES: It's probably just because I'm sitting off on the side here.

JUDGE SLAVIN: You're kind. Go ahead.

MR. HUGHES: Mr. Lehr, I have a few questions.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. HUGHES:

Q. When you were giving testimony earlier, you were talking about a receiving area or what I would call a laydown yard. Is there going to be a central laydown yard or will -- I'll leave it there. Is there going to be a central laydown yard?

A. In that manner, there will be to start the project, the way -- with the project being phased. So the way it would work for the

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material, receipt and laydown, the material would come in -- so on the north phase, with that project area just being the first one, it would be a designated storage area for when the material comes in. It would go to that area, and then as the project progresses, even in the north area, as it progresses south, then the material would be staged from that central area out to where it is in the north -- north area.

Then as the project progresses to the central portion and to the south portion, there will just be a receiving -- everything will be received probably again on the north side -- on the north area of the site. Once it's received and inspected, that material would get direct -- would go directly out to where it's needed in the central and south project.

So as the project progresses, since it's such a large site, the material doesn't get stored in just one spot. It will get staged out very quickly.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

Approximately what size will that laydown or receiving area be?

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A. It -- the initial area upfront, when they first start, would not be real big. You know, it might take up an acre.

What you'll get is, the post for the piles that are coming in will come in, so you'll need some room for that, and some of the solar panels will start to come in. So it's not going to be a huge area. It's probably an acre or less.

Q. Okay. You also stated that there wouldn't -- there probably wouldn't be any primary parking area, just like there's not a true laydown yard. How would the parking be handled as it moves through the different stages?

A. So initially there would be a -- kind of a central parking area that will -- again, it would be on the north side of the site. So what will happen is, construction trailers, temporary trailers, will be brought in, and a parking area will be established right by those construction trailers.

So when the project first starts, there may be 80, 90 people onsite, and they would all park in that initial central parking area. Then as the project progresses down to the south,

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smaller parking areas will be designated at certain portions of the project, and those would be really dictated by the construction contractor as he sees fit to allocate his people out.

So you wouldn't have everybody -- once the project is at its peak, let's say, crew -- crews coming out to the site, you wouldn't have everybody coming to that central parking area. You may have some coming to that and the other people, as they're -- they would go to the parking areas designated for the areas that they're working in, and they would move -- their parking areas would move as they went south on the project.

Q. All right. And you indicated that there would be construction trailers or operations trailers?

A. Yeah, there will be temporary construction trailers. They would come in at the start to give the construction management people a place to work, and they would stay throughout construction, and then when construction is done, those trailers get taken away. And if there is a small O and M building, which I don't

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believe has been decided at this point because the project will be controlled off site, so there really isn't a need for any long-term, permanent structure at the site. I don't know that that's been finalized, whether there will be a little O and M. And it would be just a small, little trailer basically, if there is one.

Q. Okay. And then am I to assume that those operational trailers, construction trailers, will also move as you go through the different segments of the construction or the different areas -- the north, the central, the south -- will they move as well?

A. No. They typically don't, even on large projects like this. Once they establish the location for that, the construction trailers, they stay there throughout the duration of construction.

Q. Okay. Then how much area will that -- those construction trailers and that initial or primary parking area, how much acreage will that encompass?

A. It would probably take up maybe an acre and a

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half, two acres, something like that. The construction trailers are the modular type, kind of a double-wide trailer, and there might be two of those on a large project like this, and then you would have the parking. So, yeah, maybe -- maybe up to three acres probably at most.

Q. Okay. Will that area be gravelled as well?

A. Yes, the parking areas would be gravel.

Q. And after the construction is done, what will be the process of bringing the back area back to original condition?

A. The final methodology would be decided with a construction contractor, but there's really two -- two real options is, the trailers would obviously get removed from the site, and they really don't leave any telltale signs. I mean, they get anchored down, and they're usually supported on some cinder blocks. All of that would get removed.

So the thing you would be left with would be the gravel parking area --

Q. Yes.

A. -- and sometimes those stay. Again, it's kind of an owner's call at the end. The gravel

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parking area could stay if there was a use for it during the long-term operation, but since this project wouldn't really -- would be controlled remotely, there wouldn't necessarily be a need for that. So then the gravel would be removed at that time, and that area would be restored back to kind of its native -- you know, grasses would be planted and so forth to stabilize the soil.

Q. Okay. You've mentioned and we have talked about the timeline on the construction a variety of times, and it's kind of a moving target, I guess. You also mentioned that there's more to the timeline than just the construction period, but I'd like to get maybe a handle on what the timeframe of actual construction in each phase is, not the stuff leading up to it, not the preparatory, but just the actual, onsite for each segment.

A. The onsite construction would be actually about 21 to 24 months.

Q. Okay. That is -- okay.

Okay. I thought in your earlier testimony you had indicated that that 21 to 24 months

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would include -- includes other things, preparatory things and that type of thing. So I just wanted to get a better handle. Thank you.

A. Yeah, if -- I'm sorry.

Q. Go ahead.

A. I was alluding to the overall schedule, things that came upfront up to construction. So if that was confusing, I apologize. But the actual construction duration is the 21 to 24 months approximately.

Q. So then am I to assume that each segment would comprise about seven to eight months?

A. Yeah, that's probably a fair assessment. Typically on projects like this, they -- the progression increases, the labor productivity gets better as the project goes on, because the people that you have working become acquainted with exactly how to install it. So it's a learning curve at the start, and then it picks up. But, yeah, a good rule of thumb would be a third of the time would go to each of the phases.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

Going a little bit more toward the actual

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solar panels, we have had a couple of significant tornados in Lee County in the last few years, and in August we had, what do they call it, a derecho, winds up to a hundred miles an hour.

What's the -- what type of force or impact can those -- can the solar panels take?

A. The solar panels, if they get impacted, they would probably crack, you know, with a rock or debris or twigs or tree limbs, depending on how hard they hit the panels. The panels are made of tempered glass, so when they get -- they don't shatter like regular glass. They would crack, kind of more like your car windshield.

The site, when the engineering is done for the design for the piles, the racking, all of that takes into account the maximum wind loads for the site, and so every site is different. So whatever the wind loads for Lee County would be, those would be used in the design for the facility. So the trackers and the racking and the piles should stay in place for those maximum wind loads, but the panels could suffer some damage based on impacts.

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Q. Okay. And I think just one more question for right now.

It was indicated in the application that they're looking at lithium batteries, Samsung batteries for backup storage, but then it was also stated that that may be -- that may be dictated by -- excuse me a second here -- PJM as to whether they are actually needed or not.

But what type of storage or what type of mounting would those require?

A. So the battery backups for utility-grade-type plants, they would be pretty much -- anymore they're all lithium-based batteries.

Q. What type of containment would they have? Are they on a cement slab? Are they housed in a building? What's the -- how do they get set up?

A. Yeah, there's a couple of ways you can do that. They would be housed inside. They wouldn't be outside, obviously. So there are some systems where the containment is in a -- kind of like a storage container, and the batteries are in racks, and that would be one methodology where it's inside a metal storage container.

The other methodology, the batteries,

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again, are in racks, but they would be in a physical building structure that's built for them. Usually the building structure is only built if you have a very large battery capacity.

So depending, as you said, what the PJM requirements are, typically the battery backup power here that I have seen has been more in the metal storage containers.

MR. HUGHES: Okay. Thank you. I think that's my questions.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Thank you.

Alice, does Rex Meyer show, before I --

MS. HENKEL: No.

JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Interested parties in the room first. By show of hand, questions of Mr. Lehr?

All right. Seeing none, I will go to the Zoomers. You're going to disappear for a minute, or Alice is going to tell me if we have got any raised hands.

Folks on Zoom, I know it's boring for me to keep saying it, but if you have a question of Mr. Lehr and you're on videoconferencing, move the cursor to the bottom of the screen where it

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says -- I think it says "participants," click on "participants," up should pop a menu that includes "raise hand." Click on "raise hand," and we will see your raised hand on this end.

If you're teleconferencing, in other words, you're on your cell phone, stay on the Zoom on the cell phone, but go to your keypad and hit -- hit Star 9 or 9 Star.

MS. KENNEDY: Star 9.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Star 9. Forgot.

Star nine, and that should raise your hand and we'll see that as well.

So I'll give you a few seconds here. Anybody got any questions?

MS. HENKEL: (Indicating.)

JUDGE SLAVIN: We've now got three.

Okay. Ali Huss, can you hear me?

MS. HUSS: Yes. Yes.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Go ahead, ask away.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. HUSS:

Q. All right. How many years have you worked in the energy development field?

A. I have got 40 years-plus in the energy

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industry.
Q. Okay.
A. I have seen all kinds of projects.
Q. And how many years of that would you say have been spent focusing on solar development?
A. Solar development's probably been over the last ten years.
Q. Okay. And during that time, have you personally worked with developing the construction for a 5,000-acre-plus solar project?
A. I have worked on construction management plans for projects that size --
Q. Okay.
A. -- Yes.
Q. And how many have been of 5,000 acres or more?
A. There's been two that I have worked on that have been this size.
Q. Okay. You also mentioned Road Use Agreements in your testimony. Will those be available for the public to view?
A. I believe so. I'm not sure the process right now on that. I know the agreements are made between the Townships and the County, as well as

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the owner. I guess I can't answer that directly. I don't know for sure.

Q. In the Road Use Agreement, if road improvements are necessitated will your construction company be doing that or will that be the responsibility of the Township?

A. Again, it would be dictated by what is in the agreement. So however that gets -- if the agreement states that the owner has to do that, then, yeah, the construction company would do the improvements, but if the Township takes that on -- so right now I don't know for sure which way that would go.

Q. Okay. What is the remediation plan for erosion that does happen during the construction?

A. So the first thing that will happen is, they'll come in and do the initial grading on the site, and then they'll put up the silt fencing to prevent the erosion off -- the soils off of the site. The roads, the side roads will be graded and then gravel -- there will be gravel installed on the roads. There would also be speed limits for people traveling on those roads to try to keep the dust down.

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And in the end, when the project is complete, the construction contractor would go back if there were any areas that eroded due to, say, heavy rains or something after construction, they would go back and repair those back to what they were originally.

Q. Okay. You also mentioned additional storm runoff channels, correct?

A. If they're needed. What typically happens is, there will be a hydrology evaluation of the site, and that will dictate how the site gets graded and whether there's going to be a need for retention ponds, for stormwater runoff channels. A lot of times there isn't, but that doesn't mean -- every site is different. So that doesn't mean there would be or wouldn't be. It just isn't known right now.

Q. Okay. Would these additional stormwater runoff channels be in easement areas?

A. I -- again, without the design, it would be hard to say where they would end up.

Q. Okay. Is your company responsible for installing the perimeter fencing around the solar project?

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A. No, we're not. We're not a construction company.
Q. Okay. Will the fence be up prior to you guys starting construction?
A. Not all of the fence. The way the project will go is, the initial areas where the construction trailers go in the parking lot, the fencing will be -- will start being installed at that point. So there will be some interior fencing if needed for materials if they're brought on site and the perimeter fence hasn't been completed yet. They'll put up some temporary fencing around materials and so forth.
Q. Okay. Have you observed your construction projects or the construction of a solar project over the span of five years?
A. The -- well, the solar projects -- if you're asking directly about solar projects, there hasn't been a solar project that spans five years of construction, but to answer your question --
Q. No, no, no. I mean, have you observed your -- I apologize. Have you observed, once the construction has completed, five years

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post-construction?
A. Oh, operation. I'm sorry, I misunderstood you. I have gone out to project sites after they have been constructed while they're in operation. I don't know that I have visited any that have been in operation for five years. I have visited a lot, I just don't recall off the top of my head if there's been a five-year period since completed construction.
Q. What were your observations of the project post-construction when it was -- were there any things that came up that you took notes that changed during construction for a next project or any impacts that had not been foreseen that did happen as a result of the construction project?
A. You know, during the -- well, to answer the first part of your question about what did I observe after construction, the facilities are in operation, they are very quiet. I mean, there's no noise generated. It's -- there's -- if there are people on site operating, it's only one or two people. There -- these plants are very self-sufficient. They're not like an

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industrial plant that you might think about. So it's still very peaceful out there, if you want to put it that way, because these projects are usually out in rural areas like the one we're talking about.

As far as lessons learned, usually the lessons learned, from what I have seen, have not been on the construction side. I mean, the construction contractors, they -- it's not really a lessons-learned, but they have over the past five or ten years gotten very efficient on installing these.

So they have learned lessons over that time of the best way to stage their crews, how many people are going to need to install the racks, how many people are going to need to install the piles. So there's been a good learning curve on the construction perspective for that, for being efficient out there during construction.

A lot of the main lessons learned center around more the -- if there's a shared facilities agreement -- I know I might be getting off base here, but usually -- some of

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these projects get very complex on where they tie into the grid, and there's a lot of agreements in place between all the different parties that might have that shared facility. That's usually where the lessons learned are. They are not out where there's been a big mistake in engineering.

Q. Have there been impacts to either drainage tile or soil that was not seen after construction had initially been completed but later on during operation?

A. Not that I have seen. The -- a lot of the projects don't encounter -- even though they are in farming areas, don't encounter the drain tiles like are on these sites.

I would say if, you know, a drain tile damage were encountered after the project was up and running, you might see it in that you would start seeing water at the surface if there was water flowing through that damaged drain tile. Although it would be difficult, there might be a way you could repair that potentially. But, no, I have not seen that.

Q. Okay. Will your company be involved in

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developing the deconstruction plan or decommissioning?

A. There's already a decommissioning plan that's been developed. We were not involved in development of that plan.

Q. So as far as actually undoing the construction of the -- of what you are putting in place, your company will not be involved in that?

A. Well, in the end, I don't know. That has to be --

Q. Okay.

A. -- decided with the owners. But I will tell you there is a decommissioning plan that's already in place.

Q. Has your company or have you been involved in the deconstruction of a solar project?

A. I don't believe we have. I don't -- I'm trying to think back. I don't think there have been many that I can think of that have been deconstructed. Now, we have been involved in reviewing of plans, the decommissioning plans, and we have been involved in doing cost estimates and determining the best methodologies to dismantle a plant, but I have not seen any

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solar plants being decommissioned or deconstructed.

Q. Are you aware of any studies or other accounts that have studied the impact to soil, drain tiles, or erosion during the actual deconstruction process?

A. No, I'm not. I have not seen any studies on that.

Q. Okay. You mentioned that you don't see any issues on the road use, correct?

A. Correct. And I believe even the Townships have looked at it without having any issues with it.

Q. Are we then to conclude that if there are gravel roads marked as heavy-travel areas, that those will no longer be gravel roads?

A. I'm not sure I follow what you're asking.

Q. The heavy-travel areas marked on the map that was passed out, some of those roads are gravel. Is it -- can -- with all of the construction use and the materials that will be brought in, would those roads need to be upgraded or are they sufficient, based on the weight of the materials?

A. That I can't answer. A study of those roads

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and interface with the County and the Townships would have to be done to determine if there would be any detriment to those roads. Typically there is not, but I can't say for sure.

Q. Okay. So what is the weight of the materials per load that would be brought in on average?

A. Well, you're limited basically by the -- with what the trucks can handle. It's mainly semis, and how -- a lot of the -- probably the biggest, heaviest piece of equipment that comes in is the transformers. All of the other materials that come in, even the piles on the back of an 18-wheel truck, those loads are very, very small really. And the solar panels that come in, you're limited by how you can stack those panels, because they come in on pallets.

So, again, those loads on those trucks are very low compared to typical loads for machinery that those trucks can handle.

Q. Okay. And I do think this next one may have been covered, but I wasn't there in person, so it was a little hard to hear. So forgive me if I repeat this.

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So the AC power from the inverters will be transmitted only via underground wire to the substation?

A. That's the plan right now, I mean, until the final design is done, but the plan is to take it all underground until you get to the substation. There may be -- there may be something that crops up where you do have to go aboveground, but that's not in the plan and that's not foreseen at this point.

Q. Okay. So when you look at other solar projects that do have the equivalent to telephone posts moving some of that, that's not the design for this project, correct?

A. It's not the intent of the design. Like I say, the design hasn't been completed or really even started yet, but the initial would be to do it underground, unless there is some obstacle which caused it to be aboveground.

Q. Okay. You also mentioned that the panels will be managed remotely; is that correct?

A. Correct. The plant will be operated remotely, correct.

Q. And what form of communication will the panels

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use to send information back to the remote management?

A. So there's a system called SCADA. It's the system that controls the whole power plant. All of the links, the communication links between the plant itself and where the control is, is either over fiber optic links or wire cable.

Q. Okay. So fiber optic does not exist in this, correct -- in this project?

A. No, there usually is fiber optic, especially around where the substation is. A lot of -- when you tie into the grid, there's a lot of communication that goes on at that point, and pretty much all the grid suppliers and the people that -- the companies like PJM that you tie into usually have requirements for some of that communication to be over fiber.

Q. Okay. So you will have to still run fiber lines from the either -- inverters to the substation?

A. No. Right now the technology has gotten away from that. It's usually WiFi for the inverters. Control of the inverters and control of the trackers is by WiFi from the control system.

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Q. So the control system and inverters will require internet?
A. Yes.
Q. Is there infrastructure there that there's currently internet access on the parcel?
A. I don't know that there is, but it would have to be put in, and that's usually just a typical part of the project, is installing the network requirements.
Q. And the -- all of that will fully tie into the substation and the grid that PJM manages?
A. For the power output, yeah. I mean, the plant itself is -- has its local control, and PJM or whoever is dispatching that plant also has control. So PJM would also have some tie-in to the control center.
Q. Okay. You mentioned during strong winds or potentially hazardous weather what would or wouldn't happen to solar panels. What is the protocol for the construction workers during winds or potential hazardous weather?
A. Yeah, that's again decided by the EPC contractor. But I can tell you, every EPC contractor, it would be a requirement pretty

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much on this contract as well, have a health and safety plan put together and approved before construction starts. So in that health and safety plan, it will define what happens if there's bad thunderstorms, that everybody either musters at certain places to get information and then is either directed onsite or to some other place. So there will be muster points around the site that will be determined.

So any adverse weather, bad wind, thunderstorms, lightning, hail, any of that, tornados, that would all be handled that way.

Q. Okay. In the event of strong winds, with the material drop sites during construction, are there risks of loose fragments or debris?

A. No, since none of these -- none of the material is very high off the ground. So the piles, which would be staged, as I said, they're very heavy, so the wind wouldn't blow them. The panels, the solar panels, they come in in crates, and they're not taken out of the crates until they're actually going to be installed.

Q. Okay.

A. So there wouldn't be, like, solar panels laying

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around that the wind could catch.

The trackers and the framing are the same way. The trackers are very heavy, so they wouldn't get blown around. The framing is in pieces, but, again, it's in boxes. They are in pallets, and they're only taken out when -- at the point that they are actually needed. So, again, there wouldn't be small pieces to be caught and blown around by the wind.

Q. Okay. So then last -- last one or two. Are you going to be working directly with Steward Creek to prepare documents necessary for the building permitting process?

A. That hasn't been decided. Right now my scope of work is to support the development of the construction management plan.

Q. Will that construction management plan need to be provided for the -- do you know if that will need to be provided for the building permit?

A. No. Typically the building permits only require drawings of the site.

MS. HUSS: Okay. All right. Thank you for your time.

THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

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JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you. I'm going to stay on the top tier here. Giles Kalvelage.

MR. KALVELAGE: Greetings.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. KALVELAGE:

Q. Hello, Mr. Lehr. I'm with Willow Creek Township Planning Group.

Some of the questions that I had have already been asked. So I'll ask a couple smaller questions and maybe a follow-up or two on some of the others.

Do you know approximately how many solar panels would be expected in a 5,000-acre farm?

A. Yeah, for property this size, being 600 megawatts, it's going to be around 2.1 million solar panels.

Q. Okay. All right. And how many -- we talked yesterday about pile machines probably making the most noise. With that many panels, how many pile machines would be -- would you expect to be working at any given time?

A. So the actual number, again, will be dictated by the construction contractor based on his schedule and resource allocations, but a project

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of this size, you would probably see maybe three to four pile machines.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

Couple follow-up questions that I have got with communication. So the WiFi would be garnished locally, would it not be?

A. Well, yeah. The way these projects work with the WiFi is, they would go out to somebody that provides WiFi, let's say, just for talking purposes, somebody like AT&T or something like that, and they would have special WiFi brought into the project site for that, a dedicated WiFi network for the control of all the systems onsite.

Q. Would that be using any of our contractors that we would have locally here, around our area?

A. I can't speak for the internet provider, but I -- yeah, they typically go to local internet providers for that. So I would assume it would be local contractors that would provide that, correct.

Q. Okay. With approximately 2 million panels, would local residents and local businesses expect to see any noticeable bandwidth

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restrictions for our normal, everyday operations?

A. Again, I can't speak for the WiFi company, but like I say, it would be a dedicated WiFi system for the plant. So I wouldn't think it would affect -- and I have never heard of, you know, on any other solar projects, of people complaining that the plant has affected their WiFi. So I would tend to believe that no, it wouldn't affect the local communities.

Q. Okay. Thank you for that answer.

One last follow-up question that I have got on the decommissioning. You mentioned that you know of no solar plants that have been decommissioned.

A. I'm sorry, go ahead.

Q. Well, I'm just kind of wondering, why -- is it because solar panels are too new and they have not outlived their lifespan yet, or is it because at the end of the project they are just left?

A. No. To -- so the reason I haven't seen any and am not aware of it is, first of all, the large solar projects, utility -- basically

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utility-grade-type projects like this, they have only started within the last ten years, and these project design lives and operating lives are usually 30 to 40 years. So these large plants are just starting in to maybe their second decade, you know, on the early ones. So none of them have reached the end of their life to actually do the decommissioning of them.

And it's not that there would be any plants just abandoned in place. I have never seen any county or community that would allow that, and I know Lee County and the local townships wouldn't allow that here either.

So, no, there are decommissioning plans for every one of those plants; they just haven't reached their life -- the end of their life to implement those plans.

MR. KALVELAGE: Okay. Well, thank you so very much. That's all the questions that I have at this point. Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you.

Terri Voitik. Terri, can you hear me?

MS. VOITIK: Am I unmuted? Can you hear me?

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JUDGE SLAVIN: You are unmuted. We can hear you.

MS. VOITIK: First off, my name is Terri Voitik, from Lee, Illinois.

I want to thank who worked so hard on the audio today. It was almost impossible to hear yesterday, so it's much better today.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Good to hear.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. VOITIK:

Q. My first question is about the topography of the area. This is a pretty special area as far as farmland, with rolling. It's not your normal, flat, boring farmland like Central Illinois.

My question for Mr. Lehr is, would the -- how much are you going to change the topography as you progress through this project?

A. That -- you know, to fully answer that question, that hasn't been decided yet. The way that process works is, a hydrology study is done to verify or get where all the stormwater flows are. So that factors into the topography of what the plant is going to end up with, as well

as when they lay out in the initial design for the solar plant itself and they run the solar models to verify that the plant can meet the output requirements, the 600 megawatts.

So those things all interact to determine what that final topography is going to look like. So that -- those points haven't been hit yet.

I will say, you know, most solar plants try to maintain the topography as much as possible. I mean, I have seen solar plants, large solar plants, built on the side of mountains. So it doesn't necessarily mean that the area that you put the plant in has to be flat. Rolling hills, I have seen plants put in on sites that have rolling hills.

So like I say, the goal, you know, it's a target, is to try to maintain the topography as close to what it currently would be.

Q. Okay. And so should you change the topography significantly, which I -- you know, I think all of us would hope that it would not be done, when you decommission, would you replace it and restore it to the way that it was left from the

glacial days?

A. Yeah, you know, that's kind of a good question. Like I say, typically -- and I would make the assumption here that the topography here would stay pretty much the way it is. There may be a few areas for drainage or if there's some shaving that may get filled in or cut out to either affect the drainage better or to provide, you know, the sunlight the panels need. But those are usually local -- you know, local areas in this whole project.

Now, you know, I wouldn't guess that the project would get flattened and then at the end the project would come back and put the rolling hills back in, so I believe that's part of the reason why they maintain the topography as close to what it is right now.

Q. Thank you.

I don't know if this question was -- or this issue was addressed yesterday because I couldn't hear when we had the environmental person, Scott Billings. But regarding any ESI, are you going to have one done or has one been done, and who is going to do it?

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A. An ESI, I'm not the environmental guy, so I don't know that I can answer that question.

MS. VOITIK: Okay. Do you know -- does anyone know, was it answered yesterday?

JUDGE SLAVIN: We've got a witness on the stand and he's under oath. At this time it's for questions of him.

MS. VOITIK: Okay.

Q. (By Ms. Voitik:) Last question is, okay, when we're ready to decommission in today's dollars, have you guys adjusted it for inflation for 35 years from today so that you aren't out of money when you're ready to decommission?

A. Yeah, the decommissioning assessment hasn't been done yet. It gets done prior to the issuance of the building permit.

But the way those cost estimates go are, yeah, they're figured in today's dollars, and you can escalate them out to what you're going to need at the end of the life of the project, but then every -- the frequency varies from county to county, but every so often that estimate gets revisited over the life of the project to make sure that it gets updated and

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compared to what's being set aside to make sure there is enough money at the end.

Q. So that should be factored in when the agreement is done?

A. I'm not sure which agreement you're talking about.

Q. Well, when we -- when you get final approval, will that be part of the agreement?

A. The cost estimate will be in the decommissioning plan, correct. I don't know -- I'm not sure what agreement you're talking about. The cost estimate has to be in the decommissioning plan prior to the issuance of the building permit.

Q. Okay. And my last question, the pylon machines -- or pile machines, how much vibration, if any, in the ground?

A. Yeah, you know, they're hammering the piles in basically, so there is local vibration around the machine. But you get 10 feet away, you can't really feel it. You'll hear it a little bit, but -- and the noise goes down substantially as you get away from that unit as well.

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So, yeah, you don't feel the vibration. Because I have stood, you know, within 30, 50 yards of them, and you don't feel it. If you're right next to it you would, but that's about it.

MS. VOITIK: Thank you. That's all I have.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you. Ms. Voitik, to answer your question, there are a couple ways you can find out what questions were asked and answered. One is, probably laborious, going to YouTube and pulling up yesterday, October 19th's session, and maybe fast-forwarding through it to get to whatever you're looking for. Or, either presently or not too far in the future, the court reporter's transcript will be available on the website, and you can page -- that's probably easier, paging your way through the transcript.

Okay. All right. Thank you, Mr. Lehr. You're excused.

And it's time for a break. We'll resume at five after 8.

(A recess was taken at 7:57 p.m. and proceedings resumed at 8:07 p.m.)

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JUDGE SLAVIN: All right, ladies and gentlemen. Resume your positions, please.

All right. Ms. Kennedy, you may continue to produce evidence.

MS. KENNEDY: Thank you. I would like to call Andrew Lines.

JUDGE SLAVIN: By Zoom; is that right? I think I saw his name up there.

MS. KENNEDY: That is correct.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Lines, a couple technical questions. First, can you hear me right at the moment?

MR. LINES: I can hear you. Can you hear me?

JUDGE SLAVIN: Yup, sure can.

MR. LINES: Great.

JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Want to raise your right hand please for me?

(Andrew Lines was duly sworn.)

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. You may inquire.

MS. KENNEDY: Thank you.

ANDREW LINES,

having been previously duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

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DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MS. KENNEDY:

Q. Could you please state your name and spell it for the record.

A. Sure. Andrew Lines, L-I-N-E-S.

Q. And could you briefly describe your educational background for us?

A. I have a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University, and I have a certified general commercial real estate appraisal license in the state of Illinois, and I hold the MAI designation, which means I'm a member of the Appraisal Institute.

Q. And what did you have to do to get that MAI designation?

A. About ten years of post-secondary study, classes at the Appraisal Institute, including over 3500 hours of commercial appraisal experience, as well as a demonstration report and a four-part two-day examination.

Q. And how are you presently employed?

A. I'm a principal at CohnReznick.

Q. And what does CohnReznick do?

A. CohnReznick is a national advisory, assurance,

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and tax firm, and there's a specialty in real estate. I serve as a partner and help oversee our valuation division.

Q. And what are your job duties as a principal?

A. I help manage our appraisal staff, I help manage workflow that goes in and out the door, I try to get new work and provide world class service to our clients.

Q. And how long have you been in that position?

A. I have been a principal for four years and I have been with the firm for nine.

Q. Do you have any other relevant work experience?

A. I worked for a year with Equity Residential Properties starting in the year 2000, and generally have been a real estate appraiser for the last 18 years.

Q. And have you performed any research related to solar energy systems?

A. I have.

Q. And could you tell us a little bit about that?

A. Sure. For the last three and a half years or so, my team and I and one of the partners I work with have been investigating existing solar arrays around the country, including Hawaii, to

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see whether or not there's any negative impact to adjacent property values as caused by proximity to the solar farm itself.

Q. And are you familiar with Steward Creek Solar?

A. I am.

Q. And are you aware that it's a proposed 600-megawatt solar farm on about 5,000 acres?

A. I am.

Q. And what materials, if any, did you review in conducting your analysis for Steward Creek Solar?

A. I examined the application packet that I believe was submitted to Lee County with regards to the solar project itself. In addition, I've reviewed studies, other impact studies, on solar, as well as various pieces of literature that discuss methodology or preparing impact studies.

Q. And could you tell us in layman's terms what a paired sales analysis is?

A. Sure. This is one of the approaches that's noted in an Appraisal Institute textbook called Real Estate Damages. This is written by Dr. Randy Bell, who's also an MAI like myself.

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Dr. Bell discusses a number of approaches, one of them is paired sales analysis, and at the most basic level, it's when you compare one property with one other property, with the only difference being one variable. So by looking at a price differential or what have you between those two transactions, you can identify whether or not one of them may have been impacted by what some people would call its presupposed view.

Q. And so you mentioned other approaches to assess impacts to real estate. What are those other approaches?

A. You can do what's called a regression analysis, which just means that you're using multiple variables. That type of analysis requires a lot of data and a big computer, and, you know, that reporting is a different way of using logs and other mathematic applied sciences to determine and to help qualify whether or not there might be an impact.

There's also grouped pairs, which is another tactic that appraisers can use in measuring impacts.

What we prefer to do is to do a slight variation on a single paired sales. So what we do is, we look at one test sales or a group of test sales and compare them to a group of controlled sales. We eliminate all subjectivity. There aren't any adjustments made for physical characteristics. We feel that this is really the best way to help isolate that particular variable that we're looking for, which in this case is proximity.

Q. And that would be proximity to the solar farm, correct?

A. For our impact study it is, yes.

Q. Is the paired sales analysis an industry standard approach for analyzing the impact of solar farm development?

A. It's certainly an approach for impact studies as an appraiser would use. Again, regression is another tactic.

There's been a lot of studies that have been performed on wind. Solar, although it's been around for a long time, there are very few studies that have been produced on a national or global basis. I'd like to think that we're one

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of the leaders in the field.
Q. Are there any factors that affect the price paid for a piece of property?
A. There are a number of different variables and factors. They can be physical. Obviously people know about location, location, location, and that certainly is an overwhelming reason why someone pays the amount that they do. Certainly for residential property, being in a highly-rated school district is one of the most important, but there are a number of factors as to why someone may pay a little bit more for this house and a little bit less for another.
Q. So how do you account for these factors so that it doesn't skew the results of your analysis?
A. So our analysis starts with just identifying all the properties that are around an existing solar array. We'll use public records for identifying whether or not any of those properties, or whatever kind of residential properties or agricultural, commercial, may have sold.

Once we have identified those sales and can prove that those transactions are market

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transactions -- so they're not bankruptcy sales or trustee sales or the result of a divorce -- and they were arms' length between a willing buyer and a willing seller, we clarify those and call them test subjects or test sales.

Once we have identified those test sales, we then canvas the marketplace in a larger area by making sure that none of those sales are in any close range to the solar farm itself, so far enough away that no one could say that, Well, the solar farm is still influencing that particular property. We made sure that our group selection of control sales bracket, subject test sales, with regards to house size, acreage, and year built, just to make sure that we're still comparing apples to apples.

It's not unlike what you might see a single appraiser do when they come and appraise your home. Might be looking at your home and they grab a group of sales in your area to measure that against.

What we don't do is do any adjustments for the physical characteristics. We make sure that there is a small adjustment made for market

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conditions as it relates to the date of sale. So we're trying to get our sales to be consistent as to when that specific test subject sold. And then we would compare the median prices per square foot of the test sales and the controlled sales and measure whether or not there's any difference.

If there is an overwhelming negative difference and that is repeatable in multiple solar, then we might be able to conclude that there's some influence derived from the solar arrays themselves. But what we've found in over two dozen solar farms that we have studied nationwide is, there is no measurable and repeatable indication of any negative loss in value.

Q. Sure.

So if I understand correctly, a paired sales analysis is where you compare the sale prices of a property with a feature of interest, or in this case the proximity to a solar farm development, and you compare that to the price of a similar property sold recently without that feature?

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A. Not just one house, but a group of homes.
Q. Do you consult anyone in conducting your analysis?
A. So my partner, Patricia McGarr, has been a real estate appraiser here in the state of Illinois for over 25 years. She also serves as the vice chairman of the Illinois Board of Appraisers, where she helps set the rules that govern appraisers like myself. We have also discussed our methodology with other appraisers in the field, including Kirkland Appraisals, which is in North Carolina, and has been producing their own studies on solar farms and their impact to adjacent real estate. We have also discussed our methodology with SEA, which is the Solar Energy Association. It's an industry energy association nationally.
Q. Have you ever contacted an assessment officer?
A. Absolutely. I would say that we have conducted interviews with close to 60 or 70 different county tax assessors and municipal assessors across the country. We specifically asked assessors who have solar arrays within their taxing districts because they have the

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transactional data around them to quantify whether or not there might be an impact from an existing solar farm.

In all the interviews that we have conducted, we haven't identified a single assessor who states that they believe there is an impact, nor have we heard any assessor claim that anyone has protested their tax assessment strictly due to the presence of the solar farm in their area.

Q. Does the same ring true for real estate agents?

A. We have interviewed real estate brokers who have been party to transactions near solar arrays, and the interviews that we have conducted are consistent. Almost all brokers that we have spoken to don't believe that solar farms impact the property that they have helped sell in any way, and that the marketing times and the sale prices they believe have been consistent with the market, and that includes brokers that we have spoken with here in Illinois.

Q. So is it a fair statement that when you conduct your analysis, you don't just hop on the

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internet, go on Zillow, and look at the list price of a property; is that fair?

A. No, one of the first things they teach you in Appraisal Institute classes is that a list price is really nice, but it isn't a fact. A fact is when a sales and a transaction happens, and that's why we measure sale prices and not just list prices. That's a very important part of being a real estate appraiser.

Q. Are there factors of a sale that could perhaps make that sale an outlier in your analysis?

A. Absolutely. As I mentioned before, it's really critical when we use -- when we're looking for test and control data that we remove any outliers that may have been caused by an atypical sales transaction. So if it's a bankruptcy or short sale or if it was related parties, those situations may require some kind of adjustment. So instead of doing an adjustment, we just remove it from any consideration because they don't uphold to the definition of market value.

Q. Jumping to this project at hand, did you prepare a report for Steward Creek Solar?

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A. We did.
Q. And when I thumbed through the report, it looks like your study includes research and analyses of existing solar farms in Illinois, Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and Virginia; is that correct?
A. That's correct.
Q. And why did you select those areas specifically?
A. So, again, while solar has been around for a while, large-scale, utility-scale solar projects are not as ubiquitous, especially not in the Midwest. I have a couple exhibits within the report which show the number or the placement of existing solar farms that are in excess of a hundred megawatts, and then also existing farms that are in excess of 200 megawatts, and they are very sparse. The only one really in the Midwest that's a hundred megawatts is in Minnesota; otherwise, you have to go to the southeast or the far southwest.

We tried to identify as large a solar array that we could find that had residential property immediately adjacent to offer test

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subjects for us to measure. We can't just create data. And so there were some solar farms that may have been large enough for us to study but didn't have any data around them, and so we couldn't study them.

These, we felt, were the best fit and had the largest amount of data for us to try to measure whether or not there was an impact. In most cases, these were similar agricultural communities that had, you know, small, four-bedroom, two-bath homes on, you know, two to five acres. And in some circumstances, they are in areas where the property values are very high, and in some there are a couple areas where the property values are very low.

We made sure we understand what property values were in Lee County, and we did our best to make sure we had a study that had consistent prices with fairly consistent-looking homes. And I do feel that the study in Minnesota is probably the best. It is also the largest one that we identified. But overall, I think we did the best that we possibly could.

Q. That leads me to my next question then. So the

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largest solar farm that you have included in your report for this project is the North Star Solar Farm in Chisago County, Minnesota?

A. Yes.

Q. And that's a hundred-megawatt solar farm on about a thousand acres; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. So obviously that's significantly smaller than the proposed size of Steward Creek Solar?

A. It is, but, again, these solar arrays in almost -- most of their fashion, they are not created as a one perfect rectangle. It's only in the smaller senses, you know, 10- to 25- or 30-megawatts, where you might see it in one solid rectangle. So there's no case where you're going to have a single adjacent property that's going to be in view of the entire 600 megawatts at once. It's spread out; it has to be because it's a lot of land.

And so I don't feel that the studies that we performed and the site selection that we did in identifying these sites for study are inconsistent with what I would call scattered sites. You basically have a number of parcels

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that are fairly contiguous where the number of megawatts for that particular acreage might be, you know, in the two to ten category on it. So it's just an assemblage of those over, you know, a land swath.

In this case, and I'm sure -- I have heard solar developers say this, they are really bound by, you know, landowners who want to cooperate and be part of that development.

Q. And so if I understand this correctly, you have included the North Star Solar Farm in your report because the surrounding area is similar to the surrounding area at Steward Creek Solar; is that right?

A. That's correct.

Q. What about the topography of the North Star Solar Farm, is that similar to this area?

A. Yeah, I wouldn't call it extremely flat. It may not have, you know, quite the contours that this area, you know, just east of I-39, has, which is really wonderful, but certainly there is a little bit of topography there.

And then we have other sites that we have included in the report, one is in North Carolina

and Virginia, which do have even larger contours and steeper topography.

Q. Have you ever investigated a solar farm in excess of 100 megawatts?

A. We did look at some very large, established solar arrays. This includes the Topaz Solar Farm, which is in San Luis Obispo County in California. That one is 585 megawatts. It generally was developed in an environmentally-sensitive area of the dessert and pretty far away. It's over an hour drive from any town or city. There is very limited residential development nearby. It is not really as consistent with regards to climate that is in the Midwest. Ultimately, because of the data and because of some of the physical characteristics, it wasn't a solar farm that we opted to study.

Q. So is it fair to say that it's not that there aren't any large solar farms, it's just they are not in an area comparable to this area here proposed in the Steward Creek Solar Project?

A. There are large solar farms, as I showed in my exhibit, in my report. They are fundamentally

all in the southwest, but ultimately I'm bound and can only study solar farms that have existing sales data immediately around them.

Q. With the properties that you have analyzed in your report and with your experience in this field specifically, do you believe that a project of this magnitude will negatively impact surrounding land values?

A. I do not believe it will negatively impact surrounding land values.

Q. And why?

A. I'm sorry, please repeat.

Q. Why is that?

A. Based on our study, the ten studies that were included in the report, an additional 15 to 20 solar farms and smaller studies we have conducted nationwide and in Hawaii, we have not seen any consistent and measurable negative impact as caused by being next to a solar farm. And, again, this is substantiated with our own data, our own measurements, studies conducted by other appraisers, studies conducted by county assessors and their own information inhouse, as well as interviews that we have had with local

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real estate brokers and residents. We have gone door to door and interviewed residents that live immediately adjacent to solar farms. In all of those cases, none of them seemed to indicate that there should be a concern.

Q. Have you ever seen a solar farm system where it surrounds an adjacent property on all four sides?

A. In Minnesota, there are four homes that are right next to each other. You know, they are three-, four-, five-acre sites, long and narrow. So there's a group of them that have solar on all four sides. There's also a residence across the street which has it on three sides. Those setbacks, I want to say, are about a hundred feet from the property line, so fairly close.

There aren't a lot of examples of a single residence having four solar arrays right around it and within a hundred feet. But I don't think, based on the data that we have seen and interviews that we have conducted, that there's a cause for concern, especially not when we're talking about the proposed and with the really large setbacks that Hexagon is planning for this

particular development.
Q. So would you agree that the further the setback from the residence, the less likely it will negatively impact that adjacent residence?
A. Again, I don't believe that there would be an impact, but certainly I think that's going to put the existing property owner more at ease. Whether or not a buyer would consider that in their pricing, again, I don't believe that there's an impact. But certainly for existing residents, I think that's a real nicety and probably a benefit.
Q. So in your experience, Mr. Lines, when do you tend to see a negative impact to property values?
A. We have done impact studies on a number of different kinds of uses that people are concerned about. That includes big box retail, landfills, waste transfer stations, transmission lines, zoning districts, truck terminals. We have looked at a lot of different kinds of real estate.

What we normally see are, when there is a physical impact to an adjacent residence or an

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adjacent property, that's typically where you're going to see the most impact. If you're living next to a quarry and that quarry is doing blasting and the ground shakes and dirt is thrown into your yard, that is certainly a situation that most people are not going to be able to tolerate. So they will tend to leave their homes as soon as they can, and they end up selling at a pretty low value or a pretty low price.

We see it again if your home is located, you know, 10 feet from a roadway and now you have a lot of heavy trucks that are moving by, shake the ground, rattle your house, that's another example if it's continued and ongoing where you might see some real impact. Where something crosses onto your property, it becomes an encroachment, that certainly can be destructive to value.

That's usually where we see the most impact. We don't see an impact for passive uses, especially not ones like this which are really quiet, where you don't have anybody really coming to the property, which you can't

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see in the evenings at all or probably not even midday if you have got an effective screening around it. I can't see that this is a particular use that's going to have a real negative impact.

Q. So that's leading me to my next questions. Can you smell a solar energy farm?

A. I mean, there's people out there that smell metal really well. I have been to them, and I haven't smelled anything unreasonable.

Q. And to the best of your knowledge, does a solar farm cause any objects to be ejected onto an adjacent property owner's land?

A. Not that I have seen.

Q. Is there any shadow flicker associated with a solar energy farm?

A. No. My understanding is, the single access trackers move really, really slowly.

Q. What about any vibration?

A. Not that I'm aware of.

Q. And what about the noise level of a solar energy farm?

A. You know, some of the inverters and the transformers that they put on site, I think they

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can have some kind of sound, like an air conditioner, within 150 feet, but outside of 150 feet, in the studies that I have seen -- and I'm not a sound expert, but my understanding is that there's no noise that can be heard outside that distance.

Q. And so through your research, do you believe that this proposed solar farm, do you believe that it will have any negative impact on adjacent property?

A. I do not.

Q. And it's my understanding that you have prepared a PowerPoint presentation for tonight?

A. I have, if it's of interest to the Board and individuals present.

Q. And you have also prepared an actual report for the ZBA; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

MS. KENNEDY: Judge, I would like to mark the impact study as an exhibit. I forget what number we're on.

JUDGE SLAVIN: That's the one -- the shorter one?

MS. KENNEDY: This one would be the longer

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one, I believe.

JUDGE SLAVIN: I'm not trying to be difficult. There's one with his picture on the front.

MS. KENNEDY: Sure.

JUDGE SLAVIN: And there's one without his picture on the front. So which one do you want to mark first?

MS. KENNEDY: It doesn't matter. We can mark the one with his picture on it first.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. That would be, I think, 8, but let me check. Yes, this would be Petitioner's 8.

(Petitioner's Exhibit Number 8 marked for identification.)

MS. KENNEDY: And then the next one would be Petitioner's Exhibit 9.

JUDGE SLAVIN: That's correct.

(Petitioner's Exhibit Number 9 marked for identification.)

Q. (By Ms. Kennedy:) Mr. Lines, did you personally prepare both the report and the PowerPoint presentation?

A. I am a signator of the report and I prepared

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it. We do have some additional staff that helps with some of the research and putting things together. My partner and I, Pat McGarr, oversee the production, all of the data, we review all the data and put it all together, so yes.

MS. KENNEDY: Judge, at this time I'd like to admit them into evidence.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Not until he testifies about them, but that's -- I'll reserve that.

MS. KENNEDY: What's that? I missed that. I am sorry.

JUDGE SLAVIN: I'm sorry. I said, I'll reserve that because there's no foundation laid for them yet.

MS. KENNEDY: Sure.

Q. (By Ms. Kennedy:) I'm going to have you go through your PowerPoint presentation, now, if you will.

A. Okay. Is this something you want me to do using Zoom?

Q. Yes, if you could share your screen, that would be appreciated.

A. Hold on one second here. Okay. Let me know when you can see it.

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Q. Yup, we can see it.
A. Great.
Again, here is my background. We have kind of gone over that.
This is Pat McGarr, who is my partner and who also signed the report.
It's always helpful to understand the market for solar. And so the state of Illinois has a national ranking, based on existing capacity, of 30th. And so obviously the former governor had instituted some policies to help encourage some of that development, and that's one of the reasons why we're seeing a lot of applications and a lot of solar development happening in our state. I think that's always good to understand kind of the baseline of that.
You know, existing developments that we have been able to study, well, we studied the largest one that is here and erected, and that's the Grand Ridge Solar Farm. There's a couple other ones, there's one in Chicago, in the city, that was developed by Exelon. There's a smaller one by U of I.
Rockford has one that's immediately

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adjacent to the airport. We have studied it. It's not large enough, and there really isn't a good quality of data right there.

But that's a good education of kind of amount of the solar and renewable energy that's scheduled to be in the state.

So does proximity next to solar farms impact values? Again, our methodology comes from the textbook Real Estate Damages by Dr. Randy Bell. We have reviewed studies that have been published, we have interviewed market participants, and we have prepared paired sales analyses to compare these potentially-impacted properties.

Again, we're looking at test areas, which are homes and land that's located immediately adjacent to the solar array, and then comparing them with control areas, with control subjects, which are removed from any influence of the solar farm that are consistent in terms of physical characteristics.

We have also conducted a before-and-after analysis to track differences in unit sale prices. We have done that for a couple of the

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solar farms, not every one but enough that we can safely say that there isn't any difference between sales that were occurring before the solar development was announced or after it was erected.

Again, what Dr. Bell says is that, If there's a legitimate detrimental condition, there will likely be a measurable and consistent difference between the two sets of market data. So we need to see it multiple times in order to really declare that there is an influence.

We have done this research on what I'm about to show you, and we have looked at range of sale prices, differences in unit sale prices, time on the market, overall marketability. We studied rates of appreciation, and we have looked to see whether or not solar impacts new development on existing pieces of land that are next to it. In all the research that we have conducted, we haven't been able to find that quantifiable and consistent detrimental impact.

As I mentioned before with large-sale solar, we understand that this is really large development, really large proposed development,

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and we wanted to make sure that we were attending to that for the County Board and for the county residents.

You see two maps here that are courtesy of seia.org, S-E-I-A. You're welcome to go on there and take a look at where all the solar farms are across the county.

There's two maps here, one of a hundred megawatts and over and one of 200 megawatts and over. As you can see, there's only one here in the Midwest. They are all -- most of them are in pretty dessert and super remote areas. And for 200 megawatts, it's even fewer.

So, again, we tried to identify solar arrays that we thought would provide some meaningful data. I'm going to take you through a few of them, not all of them, just for brevity purposes.

The first one here in Illinois, this is in LaSalle County. This is the Grand Ridge Solar Farm. This is a 20-megawatt solar farm that opened in 2013, some time ago. There is a home in the corner. You see it's labeled Number 12. What we can do, if you're curious, is we'll go

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onto GIS and we'll identify, using the tax maps, each property that's immediately adjacent. So you see these numbers from 1 to 14. We don't look at the ones that are removed. It's got to be touching to some degree. It might be right across the street, but it's effectively touching on the tax maps. Then we'll go and we'll look through public records to identify whether or not any of those have sold, if they have sold multiple times, and see if any of the transactions have been during the existence of the solar farm itself.

So in this one, on 12, it was a small house on a pretty small lot, and so we compared this home with five other homes in the general community within the township but outside of any possibly seeing the solar array. So well over, I believe, a quarter mile away from this existing solar farm.

In this particular instance, this is about 479 feet, we found that the controlled sales had a median sale price that was actually a little bit less than the sale price of the test subject itself; meaning that there was no negative

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impact from being located immediately next to the Grand Ridge Solar Farm.

The next one I'll talk about is the one in Minnesota, which I think is very applicable. Here you can see the group of homes that I mentioned that are flanked by solar on all four sides, including one here that's flanked on three sides.

This is an interesting story. The developer believed that he was going to use these homes that were within the project, he was going to use them for temporary employment housing and possibly he might tear them down and erect solar in their stead. What he did is, he had them all appraised, and then he individually negotiated sale prices with each one of the owners to force sale on the homes. He overpaid for the homes to get them out.

What he realized after building the project is, he didn't need them anymore. He put them all back on the market with one broker, and the broker noted that all of them sold within 60 days and all at market prices that were above the original appraisals. This is a really good

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indication that this doesn't deter people from living near these. In fact, one of the homes was reoccupied and bought back by one of the original owners who ended up being able to pocket some cash on that one. So, again, somebody who was living there, left, came back.

This is a greater map of the entire thousand acres with all the development. You can see how it is a little bit scattered. So you have homes that are nearby and immediately adjacent.

We found some homes, again, that were market prices and were able to compare them to controls that were outside, again, right near them. We found that there was very little difference here; 0.43 percent. This particular solar farm had the local county assessor do his own before-and-after analysis. This was released to the public. You can find it on the internet.

We repeated the study, just to make sure it was accurate, and it is. So we feel that we have got multiple studies here that show that there wasn't any impact on any of the

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residences. And, again, this is the largest one that we were able to study, and it's here in the Midwest.

The third, which had a lot of data for us to look at, was just south of the Indianapolis, Dominion Indy Solar. We looked at agricultural land. We looked at, as you see Number 2 here on the side of the screen, which was -- you know, it was about an 80-acre parcel.

We looked at farmland values, just to make sure. This is a little bit near the trend of development. So you might be concerned that if you had some farmland that you weren't going to be able to sell it for redevelopment because now you're next to a solar farm. Well, that's not the case.

But it also was immediately adjacent to a production home subdivision, where a lot of the homes were the same. For a real estate analyst like myself, that's great, because now I have a lot of data that backs up to the solar farm, and I can compare that to very similar production homes that are in the same community but are located much further away and see if there's any

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difference.

We grouped these into time periods because there was a bit of a spike, and what we found was that the homes that back up here across the street, where you can see the solar from the backyards, that there wasn't any difference in price.

We also did that before-and-after analysis that I mentioned. So we looked at these target homes before and after the solar farm was announced and constructed. We found that the trend lines were similar with the control areas. We also mapped it across the FHFA house price index for east, north, central, which includes this area of Indiana. And as you can see, both the parabolas here follow the trend line that was happening on a larger basis and nationally, as many of us probably remember it going down and then things coming back up again, which was nice.

One interesting tidbit to note is that there was a 10-acre, very long parcel. You can see here in the middle of the picture, it was obviously used for row crops. Somebody built a

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pretty magnificent home with a huge inground pool, and that home is literally 150 feet away from the solar farm. This, to us, is a really important piece of data, because it shows that someone is willing to develop and invest a lot of money into a really nice home that is immediately adjacent to solar panels. In this case, it was about 150 feet. There was some natural screening there, mostly deciduous trees, but it's still 150 feet away.

This is probably the last one I'll show you. I don't need to probably go through all ten. But this one is in Lapeer, Michigan. Again, Midwest. These were two, kind of, side-by-side solar farms. We found a test sale, one on Turrill, on the right, and then three on Demille, which is on the left.

When we looked at those home prices compared with controlled sales located in Lapeer but away from these two solar farms, we didn't find a large difference. And, in fact, both of those cases, it favored the homes that were closer to the solar farm itself.

Here's a conclusion of all of the studies

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that we did, all ten. This includes some -- a couple of the land prices, as well as the home prices. The range was as low as negative 3.5 percent to a high of 13.4 percent. While there was one negative, that's probably a pretty good indication that we're doing our job correctly, and it's not amazingly large.

At the end of the day when you look at the average variance and sale prices between the test and controlled sales, we came up with about 3.5 percent that favored the homes next to the solar arrays.

And, you know, a lot of county boards have asked as well, Are you saying that by putting a home next to a solar that it's going to do better? And we don't necessarily think that the solar farm panels are having a significant influence, but what we do know about residential home prices is that people will pay more to be in well-funded and highly-ranked school districts. And certainly a lot of these solar arrays will contribute to the economic consideration of an entire community, and that can be really, really helpful for everybody 's

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home value.

Ultimately, based on our research and analysis, we have concluded that there is no consistent negative impact that has occurred to adjacent property that can be attributed to proximity of the adjacent solar farm. Again, this conclusion has been confirmed by interviews with numerous county assessors who also investigated these potential impacts and found none, as well as interviews that we have had with numerous market participants, brokers, and buyers and sellers of these homes.

I think I'll end there and turn it back over to you, Courtney.

Q. Thank you.

Mr. Lines, could you pull up the actual report you performed for Steward Creek Solar?

A. Okay.

Q. Could you share your screen with us?

A. Okay.

Q. And is this, in fact, the report you prepared for the Steward Creek Solar Farm here in Lee County?

A. I believe it is.

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Q. And did you summarize the contents of this report in your PowerPoint presentation?
A. I did.
MS. KENNEDY: Judge, I would like to admit this into evidence as well.
JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Done, both.
(Petitioner's Exhibits Number 8 and 9 admitted into evidence.)
MS. KENNEDY: I have no further questions.
JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Questions of this witness, Mr. Boonstra?
MR. BOONSTRA: No, Your Honor.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Ms. Duffy?
MS. DUFFY: No, thank you.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. How about ZBA? You're first, Mr. Hughes.
MR. HUGHES: No questions.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Forster?
MR. FORSTER: Me?
JUDGE SLAVIN: Yes.
MR. FORSTER: No questions.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Buhrow?
MR. BUHROW: Yes, sir.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Microphone.

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EXAMINATION

BY MR. BUHROW:

Q. Looking at the various properties that you've looked at, did you notice very many of the residences had barriers or landscaping next to them, dealing with the solar farms, or not?

A. That's a great question, and it really varied. There are some solar farms that we studied that all they had was a simple fence, there wasn't much of a barrier, and you could peer right in to see the arrays and some of the grass lines that were there. There were others that had, you know, fairly large arbor vitae and other trees. And there was a mix of solar developers planting them and then property owners planting and screening for themselves, so it was a mix.

Q. So you didn't -- did you notice any difference in the values that you could tell then?

A. No. For the most part, the studies all had fairly similar results. So we didn't see a spike for ones that had a bunch of arbor vitae versus ones where you could peer right in, without any screening at all.

MR. BUHROW: Okay. Thank you.

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JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Bothe?

MR. BOTHE: No questions.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Mr. Pratt?

MR. PRATT: No questions.

JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Interested parties in the room first, by a show of hands, questions of Mr. Lines.

Mr. Lusz, pick one of the mics in the middle and have a seat.

MR. LUSZ: Adam Lusz, from Eldena.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. LUSZ:

Q. I have just got a question. Why wouldn't you consider an alteration of view shed as a part of your study?

A. I just want to make sure I heard you. You're wondering why I did not look at the degradation of the view shed as part of my study?

Q. Correct, as it pertains to solar, yes.

A. So our study incorporates all of the factors that individual buyers would recognize when they're acquiring a particular home. And, frankly, when you're looking at buying a home

for yourself, there are, as I discussed earlier, many variables. View shed is certainly one of them, but it may not be as high on the priority list as one might think, and, you know, depending on market to market, it may be a lot lower.

So certainly when you have a home that's on the lake and you have got some of that lakefront or maybe you're just set back from the lake and you get to look out on it, we have seen markets where you can demand a premium for that. But what we're not seeing in some of the agriculture communities is the necessity that the view shed is automatically providing that value.

If it were, then we would see markedly negative results from our studies.

MR. LUSZ: Very good. That's all.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Anybody else, question, by raise of hand?

Yes, sir.

MR. GUASTO: Loren Guasto, Steward.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. GUASTO:

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Q. How much residential development have you seen next to a solar industrial plant of this magnitude?
A. Can somebody help me repeat that question? I'm sorry, I'm having a little trouble hearing.
Q. Okay. Sorry.

How much new residential development have you seen next to a solar industrial plant of this magnitude?

A. So, again, I provided an example of a $450,000 home with a big inground pool that was developed next to a solar array. And, you know, depending on where it's located, obviously this is in a more remote area, where the trend of development doesn't necessarily exist and you may not see a lot of homes pop up immediately afterwards.

But we have seen and studied solar arrays that exist both in fairly dense suburban areas, as well as in more agricultural communities, but what we're not seeing or hearing from any market participants is that it's dissuading individuals from building or making additional housing nearby.

Q. Do people generally ask to look at homes or buy

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homes in the middle of an industrial solar plant?

A. I think people buy homes for a lot of reasons, and some of it has to do with location; you want to be near your parents, your grandparents; you want to be near your aunts or your uncle, your friends. So you look for the best fit, given your own particular budget and your own lifestyle and close to where that is. Some people move for jobs and need to be located in a particular area.

I think it just -- it goes with the saying, you know, everybody has their own preference. And so certainly there are people who are not going to prefer to live near the solar panels, but there may be buyers who do prefer it or aren't concerned about it. I think that's what the data shows.

MR. GUASTO: Okay. Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you. Anybody else in the room, by show of hand?

Yes, sir.

MR. HUSS: My name is Andrew Huss, outside of Lee.

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EXAMINATION

BY MR. HUSS:

Q. Andrew, I guess, same name?

JUDGE SLAVIN: That's fine.

MR. HUSS: Just for the record.

A. It's a great name.

Q. (By Mr. Huss:) So would you personally buy a property around -- being surrounded on all four sides, you personally?

A. Sure. And, you know, I have seen a lot of different parcels in a lot of different places, and you know what, the first thing that a lot of people do when they buy homes, even in agricultural communities, you know, build these forts against their property lines because they don't want to look at anything. They want to look at what they want to look at. So you see that happening.

And I don't have a problem with this, especially in consideration that a lot of these solar farms will hire ranchers to bring sheep to eat a lot of the grass, which kind of cuts down on some of the mowing that has to happen, especially in the first couple of years. And

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how wonderful that not only can I live next to a renewable energy source, but I could also get to see a whole bunch of sheep. I think that's pretty cool, and yeah, I wouldn't mind.

Q. Okay. So based on that comment, so the sheep that are being brought in by these ranchers, would they more than likely mow down all the grass so that there would be erosion issues?

A. No. I think they eat the grass to control the grass. I'm not a herbologist or an environmental person, but from the best I can understand is that the sheep are there to help graze. So they graze the grass that needs to be trimmed down to keep it below the height of the panels, and at the same time they are helping the land itself grow fallow over time and help rejuvenating it from where it may have been just strictly row crops for a long time.

MR. HUSS: Okay. Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Thank you.

Anybody else in the room, before I turn to the Zoomers?

Okay. Zoomers, questions, raise your hand. Sharon Bennefield.

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EXAMINATION

BY MS. BENNEFIELD:

Q. Yeah, you had said something about you had spoken to some of the homeowners in this project.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Sharon, Sharon, stop.

Q. (By Ms. Bennefield:) How many did you speak to?

JUDGE SLAVIN: Sharon, we know your name, but would you state it and what community you consider yourself living in?

MS. BENNEFIELD: Sure. Sharon Bennefield, and I live in Steward.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Now ask your question of Mr. Lines.

Q. (By Ms. Bennefield:) You had said that you spoke to some of the homeowners in this project area. How many did you speak with?

A. I did not speak to residents in the project area.

Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you said something that you did.

A. I spoke to residents who live around solar now. So in some of the different solar impact studies

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that we have done across the country, I had the chance to, you know, ring doorbells and ask, Hey, does this bother you? Was it an issue when you bought the house? Was it here when you moved in? So different residents across the country.

Q. Okay. And how many residents do live in this project area, do you know?

A. Oh, that is a good question. I remember going through the file with Hexagon when they first asked me to prepare an impact study, and I want to say I saw at least 50 to 60 different residents, you know, generally around the project area.

MS. BENNEFIELD: Okay. Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Is that it then, Sharon?

MS. BENNEFIELD: Yes. Thanks.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. Thank you.

Ali Huss?

MS. HUSS: Hello. My name is Ali Huss. I'm in Lee.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. HUSS:

Q. So you mentioned several times you struggled to

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find comparable studies; is that correct?
A. I didn't say I struggled to find them. I said that the very, very large ones are in areas that I didn't necessarily believe were comparable or didn't have the amount of data that was necessary for us to utilize them as a specific study.
Q. Does that mean that the very large ones comparable to this project didn't have homes of this magnitude inside the project, or that those homes had just not sold?
A. They are -- the one that I mentioned earlier, the Topaz Solar, literally doesn't have a single house immediately adjacent to it. There's a subdivision that's located about 10 or 15 miles south of it. Then there were others where we thought we found a couple homes, but when we went to investigate them, they didn't sell or just weren't transactions that we could use.

It's not an easy job. It's gets a little frustrating from time to time.
Q. Okay. Were there outliers -- in the data that you did present tonight as comparables, were there outliers that you did remove?

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A. Yeah, from study to study we're going to find some transactions that we can't use. You know, there -- I know there was one in Indiana that was next to the Indy Solar Farm where there was a transaction -- because there was a small 2-acre house that was part of a larger 40-acre tract that was actually sold to develop the solar, and then that particular sale had gone on to be placed under a land contract for what we believe is a related party to the original seller. That land contract lasted three years, and then it sold to the market for a lower amount.

And so when we investigated it, it appears that the assessor had marked the sale as not a market transaction, and so we had to remove it from our study even though it was adjacent.

Q. And even though it did sell on the market and not to a related party?

A. We were not able to verify whether or not it was a related party. We believe that it was. We used all of the efforts we could, but I'm not going to put data in my study that isn't fully

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verified.
Q. In your study you did display one that did have a negative impact. Is that the only sample that you have found with a negative impact?
A. That's one of them. I want to say in the 25 or 30 that we have done, I think there's maybe been one other that had a small negative. And when I say "small negative," within 5 percent. But what we're not seeing is a consistent negative impact with all of the studies that we found.
Q. Okay. So given that the studies that you were able to present are much smaller in scale -- and you have drawn a positive conclusion about property evaluations, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Would it also be possible to conclude that due to the limited data, the impact is actually unknown, not that the impact is not negative?
A. No. Because then we wouldn't have county assessors and individuals in the market that we have discussed also confirm our results. Not only that, we have multiple others, county assessors, other appraisers, who have done very similar work and also have found very comparable

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results.
Q. Of those assessors that you have contacted, have you contacted assessors that are local, within Lee County?
A. Yeah, we talked to Illinois assessors and, you know --
Q. Inside of Lee County?
A. We have talked to individuals in Lee County. We talk to Lee County individuals about wind, for obvious reasons, and we have conducted an impact study of wind turbines in Lee County, and there isn't a fear from the assessors that we have spoken to.
Q. So you would -- you actually spoke with Lee County assessors, not "the" Lee County assessor, but assessors inside of Lee County regarding the solar project?
A. I believe so. That's a good question. That's a good question. I'll have to get back to you on that. If you ask your next question, because I know you have more, I'll see if I can find that in the report.
Q. And any of the other assessors that you have spoken with nationwide, you have not heard any

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assessor in their estimations to say they have appraised a property with a lesser evaluation due to solar?

A. No. The ones that we have spoken to have not indicated that they have seen any negative impact that's caused by solar.

There was a study that was done at the University of Texas, and that study did a geospatial analysis which helped prove that solar developers like to be in remote areas where there's inexpensive land that's away from residents.

The second half of that study was a survey that they had conducted via email of other assessors, and of the 440 that they had sent out, I think they had a response of about 10 percent, so about 40 assessors.

Of the assessors that responded to their email, and you can look this up, 90 percent of them did not believe that there was an impact that's directly caused by solar. A couple that did not have any solar in their actual districts responded that they thought there could be but that they also noted they didn't have any data

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to support that.

So based on the market interviews that we have done and we have concluded, we don't think assessors who have solar in their areas believe that there's a negative impact.

Q. Referencing that study, there were assessors referenced in that study that had assessed inside a solar district that did find negative valuations, correct?

A. No, I don't believe that that's accurate. At least that's not my memory of the study.

Q. Okay. If they had responded that they had done this assessment near solar, was there a differentiation in the negative impact between small-size solar and utility-size solar?

A. I don't remember that being a question in that particular study.

Q. You don't believe the study studied the different megawatts of solar between 1.5 megawatts, 20 megawatts, and 102 megawatts?

A. You're cajoling my memory, so that is -- if that is the case, then they may have responded to that.

Q. Okay. So if respondents in that study had

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studied solar and responded that there was a negative impact to large-scale solars in relation to residences, how did that not get included in the presentation?

A. Again, our assessment of that particular analysis was that most of the respondents that had solar in their counties did not see a negative influence, and that is confirmed by all of the interviews that we conducted. All of the interviews and all of the persons that we spoke with are within the back of our report that takes up three pages.

Q. Okay. And in that report there are people that you have spoke to inside of Lee County or not?

A. No, I'm looking in here, and, you know, Lee County we did for the wind but not for the solar.

We spoke with Vicki Crouch, who is the township assessor in LaSalle County. That's the one with the Grand Ridge Solar Farm. We spoke with Ken Crowley, Rockford Township Assessor in Winnebago County. That's one of the Rockford solar farms that I previously mentioned.

Q. So you did speak with people inside of

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Illinois, just not specifically Lee County?
A. That's correct.
Q. And that was in regards to solar, not just wind?
A. Correct.
MS. HUSS: Okay. All right. Thank you for your time.
JUDGE SLAVIN: All right. Thank you.
All right. I'm looking for more Zoomers with hands up. Give you a few seconds here to find your cursor or punch your keypad.
There's one. Terri Voitik. Can you hear me, Terri?
You need to unmute her, Alice.
MS. HENKEL: I'm working on it.
JUDGE SLAVIN: Oh, sorry.
MS. VOITIK: Am I unmuted now?
JUDGE SLAVIN: You are unmuted mow.
MS. VOITIK: Terri Voitik, Lee, Illinois.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. VOITIK:
Q. I just have one question of the speaker this evening. I would like his highest truth. Should he be living in his home, the home that

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he lives in that exists today, and a 600-megawatt power -- -megawatt solar farm came to be next to him, would he want to live next door to it?

A. The highest truth, yes. And the reason is that they make great neighbors, they don't throw parties, they don't throw something --

Q. Neither --

A. -- they don't throw anything on your yard.

Q. Neither do --

JUDGE SLAVIN: Terri --

Q. (By Ms. Voitik:) -- soybeans and cornstalks.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Ms. Voitik, you asked the question. Let him answer the question.

MS. VOITIK: All right. Sorry.

THE WITNESS: It's okay.

A. I understand that anyone who has a new development going up next to them, that they are concerned, and that's the right for every human being that lives in this great country.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Let's not give a speech now. Let's just you answer the question.

A. I don't have any problems with living next to a large solar development.

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MS. VOITIK: Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: Okay. That's it, apparently.

Others? Again, another ten seconds for Zoomers to raise their hand.

All right. That concludes it. And, Mr. Lines, you are -- you may quote-unquote step down.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

JUDGE SLAVIN: And that will conclude -- it's ten after 9. We'll conclude for this evening.

There was some talk about picking up tomorrow night, but I have been convinced that we'll stick with the available dates that we announced first; and, that is, we will recess tonight's session until Thursday. That's 48 hours from now, or 46 hours from now. Here at the Old Lee County Courthouse beginning at 7, Thursday, the 22nd.

Have a good one, everybody. Be safe.

(The hearing was recessed at 9:15 p.m.)

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On this 20th day of October, A.D., 2020, I do signify that the foregoing testimony was given before the Lee County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Bruce Forster, Chairman

Dee Duffy,
Zoning Enforcement Officer

Callie S. Bodmer
Certified Shorthand Reporter
Registered Professional Reporter
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