

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BEFORE THE
NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

SEC DOCKET NO. 2019-02

**APPLICATION OF CHINOOK SOLAR, LLC FOR A CERTIFICATE OF SITE
AND FACILITY FOR THE CHINOOK SOLAR PROJECT IN FITZWILLIAM,
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**PREFILED SUPPLEMENTAL TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL BUSCHER
ON BEHALF OF
CHINOOK SOLAR, LLC
August 31, 2020**

1 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

2 A. My name is Michael Buscher. My business address is T.J. Boyle Associates, 301
3 College Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401.

4 **Q. Who is your current employer and what position do you hold?**

5 A. I am a professional landscape architect within the state of Vermont and owner of
6 T. J. Boyle Associates, LLC. T.J. Boyle Associates is a company that specializes in
7 landscape architecture, visual resource analysis, and various technical services associated
8 with construction projects.

9 **Q. Have you testified previously in this docket?**

10 A. Yes. On October 18, 2019, I submitted pre-filed direct testimony with an
11 overview of the anticipated visual impacts of the Project and a Visual Impact Analysis
12 (“VIA”) that was included as Appendix 13 to the Application.

13 **Q. Since you filed your direct testimony in this docket is there any additional**
14 **information relevant to the VIA that has come up or been submitted?**

1 A. The only additional information relevant to my testimony and the VIA that has
2 come up is that a question was raised after the Application was submitted about certain
3 photo simulations. Admin. Rule Site 301.05(b)(7) provides that the VIA should contain
4 photo simulations “to the extent feasible, from a sample of private property observation
5 points within the area of potential visual impact...” The VIA did include some visual
6 simulations in Appendix C to the VIA (hard copies were included in the 11 x 17 binder).
7 These were simulations of the view from the summit of Mount Monadnock and from
8 Telemark Hill in Fitzwilliam. Other photo simulations were not considered to be
9 feasible. As noted on page 20 of the VIA: “Project equipment is low in profile, allowing
10 surrounding vegetation to effectively screen views from most of the surrounding
11 area.” As further noted on page 39 of the VIA “visibility of the Project would be
12 extremely minimal.” Due to the vegetation immediately surrounding the Project, very
13 limited visibility of the Project area is expected based on the field investigation.
14 Additionally, the viewshed appeared to over-represent potential visibility (e.g., Appendix
15 B to the VIA – Chinook Photo Inventory, Viewpoint D-7). While the viewshed results
16 (see Appendix A to the VIA – Maps 3a and 3b) indicate minor isolated views on private
17 properties in the area, based on the field investigation results and a desktop review of the
18 viewshed, the likelihood of significant visibility from private properties was determined
19 to be so limited that site visits would be unlikely to result in meaningful images or
20 photographic simulations. Several of the photos provided in the Photo Inventory,
21 Appendix B of the VIA, included views taken near residential properties with the highest

1 potential for visibility of the Project. However, no visibility was not detected. In
2 particular, visibility was anticipated near Viewpoint D7 from desktop analysis, and a
3 simulation from this location would represent views from a private residential property.
4 However, field investigation revealed the treeline on the far side of the field adjacent to
5 the road, obstruct views to the Project. As such, an effort to gain access to each property
6 and obtain useful photographs for simulations was determined to not be reasonably
7 feasible. Chinook submitted a letter in the docket dated November 27, 2019 indicating
8 that this was the case.

9 **Q. Do you know whether Chinook is considering using different solar panels**
10 **and if so whether that would have any effect on the VIA which you completed for**
11 **this Project?**

12 A. It is my understanding that Chinook is considering using different solar panels
13 than those that were identified in the Application. As they indicated in the October 2019
14 Application (p. 23), because the specific panel supplier and model will be finalized closer
15 to construction, the solar panels selected at that time may differ from the ones that were
16 identified in the Application based on conditions such as availability and technological
17 advances. It is also my understanding that the other solar panels which are being
18 considered are bifacial panels. The aesthetic review and associated exhibits which I
19 prepared were for a 12 foot maximum height. The photo simulations utilized a 25-degree
20 tilt. As long as the solar array configurations are a 25 degree tilt or less and 12 foot height

1 or less my visual assessment work will still be valid. It is my understanding that the
2 bifacial panels being considered would be within these ranges.

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5 **Q. Does this conclude your supplemental testimony?**

6 A. Yes.

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