

03 February 2025

Kieran Stout
Fire Chief
Pingree Grove & Countryside Fire Protection District (PGCFPD)
10 N 255 Dittman Road
Elgin, IL 60124

RE: Rutland East Solar Farm, LLC
Fire Protection Comments

Chief Stout:

Pursuant to your initial e-mail dated 09 December 2024, and a subsequent online meeting to discuss specific elements regarding our site plans, Rutland East Solar Farm, LLC (RESF) is providing the following responses to questions and/or comments from the PGCFPD, as noted below. These responses should clarify our system design, protocols and equipment as presented on our site plan.

- **All firefighting, including grass fires, are to be done from outside the exterior of the bordering fencing. The owner agrees to accept damage to their equipment in the case of a fire. This part of the agreement needs to be documented in writing (Local Requirement).**

Response: *RESF staff understand the methodology to fight fires is best determined by PGCFPD personnel. During construction permitting, RESF management provide written agreement to this condition as part of the emergency response plan.*

- **It is required that this occupancy installs a lock box system (Knox Box). This system will eliminate the unnecessary damage caused by forced entry. Lock box shall be installed adjacent to the locked gate leading into the property and shall contain all keys for locks installed (Local Requirement). *Appears adequate as shown on plans.***

Response: *RESF will provide the necessary lockbox systems in full compliance with PGCFPD requirements.*

- **It is required that signage be provided adjacent to the locked gate leading into the site that provides all contact information in the case of an emergency on the property (Local Requirement).**

Response: *RESF will provide the required emergency signage as indicated on our final construction plans, in full compliance with PGCFPD requirements.*

- **A twenty-five (25) foot buffer zone located beyond the drip line on the exterior side of the fencing shall be provided to allow access for firefighting purposes. Plantings or agriculture use of the adjacent areas cannot interfere with the buffer zone (Local Requirement).**

Response: *Per subsequent e-mails, the reference to a drip line has been ignored; PGCFPD requirements will focus on the provision of adequate access to all portions of the site. An online meeting on 05 February 2025 produced an understanding that an adequate access path – 25-foot minimum - will be provided around the exterior of the array, utilizing compacted soil, and providing adequate turning radius for the PGCFPD’s equipment. Final site plans will reflect spacing and turning requirements.*

- **Distance between panel edges when they are in a parallel position to the ground cannot be less than ten (10) feet (Local Requirement).**

Response: *Current interrow spacing varies onsite, from a minimum of 14 feet to a maximum of 20 feet. Panel separation should fully comply with this requirement. The PGCFPD informed RESF that code amendments likely to be implemented prior to our construction permits will likely require the provision of an onsite capability to raise panels to their upright position in the event of an emergency. RESF will work with PGCFPD to incorporate this feature into our plans at that time.*

- **A shut off device shall be provided at the gate that will disable all inverters (Local Requirement).**

Response: *The RESF Emergency Response Plan will feature Solar System Disconnect Switch - a GAND operated air break 15kv, lockable in the off position. The project site will be secured and locked and only operator personnel will have access to the project via a Knox Box installed at the gated access.*

- **A maintained vegetative surface or a noncombustible base shall be installed and maintained under the photovoltaic arrays and associated electrical equipment installations.**

Response: *The RESF site plan and project narrative will detail the seed mixture and designated pollinator-friendly plantings which will populate the solar field and extend beneath the arrays and related electrical equipment which is not mounted on the concrete equipment pads. Routine maintenance will be regularly provided.*

Should you have additional questions or require further information, please contact me via telephone at (224) 524-1830, or via e-mail at robertmcneill@suryapowered.com. Our response will be expedited.

Thank you.

Robert McNeill
Development Project Manager
Rutland East Solar Farm, LLC