

STAFF REPORT LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Land Management Committee Meeting, March 1, 2023

Agenda Item 4

Applicant: Jack & Sasha Skendzel (Belle Vineyard Weddings and Events LLC)

Request: CUP for Retreat/Event Center

Background:

The applicants recently purchased the property known as “Belle Vinez” vineyard and winery. The property has an existing CUP for a Winery with incidental food service. The existing commercial structure includes a tasting room, kitchen, dining area, restrooms and offices/conference rooms. An outdoor pavilion is also located onsite.

Since buying the property, the applicants have approached Land Management with a revised business plan that no longer involves producing wine onsite. Because wine will no longer be produced onsite, the business cannot meet the requirements to be licensed as a winery by the State of Wisconsin meaning the existing CUP for a winery is no longer a viable permit option. The new focus/use of the property is to build a high-end wedding and event venue. The changes in business operations are more representative of a retreat center and the change of use requires a new CUP. The business will be renamed to Belle Âme Vineyard.

While high-end wedding and events are the primary focus, the applicants also intend to host the public for wine tasting and local food offerings. The applicants also plan to sell agricultural products, grapes, private-label wine and other alcohol in accordance with a valid liquor license from the Town of Clifton. The site currently has more than 2500 grapes vines and the applicants plan on continuing to use those grapes for off-site processing and bottling that will be shipped back to Belle Âme Vineyard for sale as authentic goods. Food will no longer be cooked or prepared on-site which is also a departure from the previous business plan. Food offerings will be catered to the site or available by food truck for events.

As part of the new business plan, the applicants are proposing a two-fold building renovation/expansion that they are calling Phase 2 and Phase 3. Phase 2 includes interior building renovations, including the addition of a 20' x 26' “groom’s area”, a building addition for a fireplace area, and an exterior wall addition to screen the trash area. Phase 2 is expected to be completed by summer/fall of 2023. Phase 3 is the addition of a 5140 sq ft main venue area that will accommodate an additional 252 people. Phase 3 is expected to be started in 2024.

Approval of this conditional use permit would authorize all three phases proposed by the applicant. Site plan review by the LMC for Phase 3 would be required prior to construction. Review by the LMC is required due to the proposed change in guest capacity and the creation of an additional parking lot.

Staff is proposing a 6-month status report in front of the LMC consistent with past practice. The LMC has historically requested periodic status reports when a conditionally permitted use is being established or expanded. This enables unanticipated needs or impacts to be addressed in a timely manner. Once a use is established, and its impacts understood, renewal is typically conducted administratively.

Issues Pertaining to the Request:

- The property is located in the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 3, T27N, R19W in the Town of Clifton. The address is W10829 875th Ave. and the property is zoned General Rural Flexible-8.
- Adjacent properties are zoned General Rural Flexible-8 and adjacent land uses are residential, agricultural and wooded.

Applicant: Jake & Sasha Skendzel
CUP Retreat Center
March 1, 2023

- General Rural (GR). This district is established to maintain and enhance agricultural operations in the county. The district also provides for low-density residential development which is consistent with a generally rural environment and allows for nonresidential uses which require relatively large land areas and/or compatible with surrounding rural land.
- General Rural-Flexible (GRF/8). This district is established to achieve the same objective as the General Rural (GR) District but to allow a greater density of residential development with the approval of the town board.
- “Retreat Center” is defined as: A facility or facilities used for professional, educational, organizational, or religious meetings, conferences, or seminars and which may provide meals, housing, and recreation for participants and may include multiple related uses managed as one operation.
- Pierce County Code Chapter 240-75(A)(1) requires site plan approval for new construction or additions to existing structures and buildings for commercial, industrial, institutional or multifamily uses. The purpose of the review is to assure site designs which promote compatibility between land uses, create safe and attractive site layouts and structures, provide proper access to streets and transportation, protect property values and contribute to efficient land use in Pierce County.

Site plan review for Phases one and two will be conducted administratively and Phase three conducted by the LMC, consistent with the established Department policy.

- The proposed interior renovations/expansion described in Phase 2 will not increase the capacity of guests and will continue to allow for the accommodation of up to 120 guests indoors. The outdoor pavilion can accommodate up to 200 guests outdoors.
- The proposed 5140 sq ft expansion area described in phase 3 will accommodate an additional 252 guests indoors. This expansion will require additional site plan approval before construction.
- Proposed event types include: Corporate events, executive meetings and retreats, local business special events, large family gatherings, large graduation celebrations, holiday events, wedding vendor events and trunk shows, engagement parties, professional photography sessions, wine tasting and marketing events.
- There are 2 access points off of 875th Ave, one for business and the other for customers.
- The tasting room would be open to the public on select days of each week. According to the CUP application, the tasting room is dedicated for wine and beer sales only; no other hard alcohol is to be served except for wedding and special events.
- The applicants have indicated that food will no longer be prepared onsite. The applicants are proposing to partner with local food vendors/caterers to have a limited appetizer menu available (e.g. charcuterie board) when the tasting room is open and strictly catered food for all weddings and events. The existing kitchen would be used only for pre-made food preparation and assembly.
- The applicants are also proposing to invite food trucks onsite for select events in the summer months when weddings or other larger events are not booked. Food trucks would be parked near the west side of the customer parking lot.
- Applicants are proposing hours of operation to be:

Applicant: Jake & Sasha Skendzel
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- 10am to 10pm on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays with vendors and guests leaving the premise by 10pm and lights out by 12am. Amplified music (<80 decibels) ending before 9pm.
- 10am to 11pm on Friday and Saturdays with vendors and guests leaving the premises by 11pm and lights out by 12am. Amplified music (<80 decibels) ending before 10pm.
- No parking is allowed on 875th Ave. Cars parked in the parking lot are to be removed by 9am the next morning per contract. The customer parking lot has 64 parking stalls with 3 being ADA compliant. The employee parking lot has 7 parking stalls on the west side of the building.
- The Clifton Town Board recommended approval of this request on 2-7-2023. The Town did not list any concerns or suggested conditions and did not reference its comprehensive plan.
- The existing conditions of the Winery are:
 1. Activities shall be conducted consistent with the application unless modified by another condition of this approval.
 2. Applicant shall obtain all necessary permits for any future structures or signs not presented in this plan from the Zoning Office.
 3. The winery shall produce “wine” as defined by the State of Wisconsin.
 4. Applicant shall develop and implement a Waste Stream Management Plan which is compliant with DNR and DSPS regulations.
 5. The parking lot shall have at least 71 parking spaces. An additional 50 parking spaces for special events shall be added or shall be delineated as required. There shall be no on-street parking.
 6. Seating capacity for the winery shall not exceed 120.
 7. Applicant shall install signs detailing the need for reservations and no parking on the street.
 8. Hours of operation shall be 11am to 9pm. Hours of operation for special events shall be 11am to 11pm with lights out at 12am.
 9. Full menu food service (pizza and appetizers) may be provided Thursday through Sunday. Hours of operation shall be 11am to 9pm with lights out by 10pm. Limited menu food service (appetizers only) may be provided in the tasting room during regular hours of operation.
 10. No beer or liquor shall be served in the tasting room.
 11. Lighting shall comply with the Land Management Department policy.
 12. Sound system shall only be within the structures.
 13. No audio bird repellent shall be used onsite.
 14. This Conditional Use Permit shall expire in 2 years. Permit may be renewed administratively if no compliance issues arise.
 15. Applicant understands that any intensification or expansion of the use will require the issuance of a new Conditional Use Permit.
 16. Applicant shall adhere to the approved Food and Wine Plan and shall ensure that food operations remain incidental/subordinate to winery operations.
 17. Amplified sound shall be limited to no more than 80 decibels at the property line.
 18. Promoted access route shall be along County Road M.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Land Management Committee determine whether the proposed use at the proposed location would be contrary to the public interest and whether it would be detrimental or injurious to public health, public

Applicant: Jake & Sasha Skendzel
CUP Retreat Center
March 1, 2023

safety, or the character of the surrounding area. If found to be not contrary to the above, staff recommends the Land Management Committee approve this conditional use permit for an Orchard with the following conditions:

1. Activities shall be conducted consistent with the application unless modified by another condition of this approval.
2. Applicant shall obtain all necessary permits for any future structures or signs not presented in this plan from the Zoning Office.
3. The parking lot shall have at least 71 parking spaces. An additional 50 parking spaces for special events shall be added or shall be delineated as required. There shall be no on-street parking.
4. Indoor seating capacity for the retreat center shall not exceed 120 until expanded parking facilities are established as part of Phase 3.
5. Site plan review by the LMC is required prior to any construction associated with phase 3 (5140 sq ft addition).
6. Applicant shall install signs indicating no parking on the street.
7. Hours of operation shall be: 10am to 10pm on Sunday through Thursdays with lights out by 12am and 10am to 11pm on Friday and Saturday with lights out by 12am.
8. All food shall be cooked offsite and be catered in. Food trucks shall be allowed in the customer parking area as long as adequate parking is available.
9. No liquor shall be served in the tasting room.
10. Lighting shall comply with the Land Management Department policy.
11. Sound systems shall only be within the structures.
12. No audio bird repellent shall be used onsite.
13. Fireworks shall not be utilized onsite.
14. A status review shall be presented to the LMC in 6 months.
15. This Conditional Use Permit shall expire in 2 years.
16. Applicant understands that any intensification or expansion of the use will require the issuance of a new Conditional Use Permit.
17. Amplified sound shall be limited to no more than 80 decibels at the property line.
18. Promoted access route shall be along County Road M.
19. All Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems shall comply with Pierce County Code Chapter 191.



Submitted By: Adam Adank
Zoning Administrator

Land Management Committee

Belle Vineyard Weddings and Events LLC
(March 1, 2023)

CUP for Retreat Center

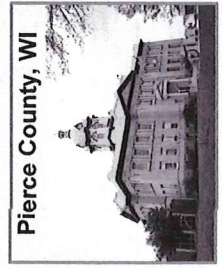
Legend

-  Dwellings
-  Retreat Center CUP
-  Parcels
-  Contours (10ft)

Zoning

-  General Rural Flexible - 8
-  River Falls ETZ

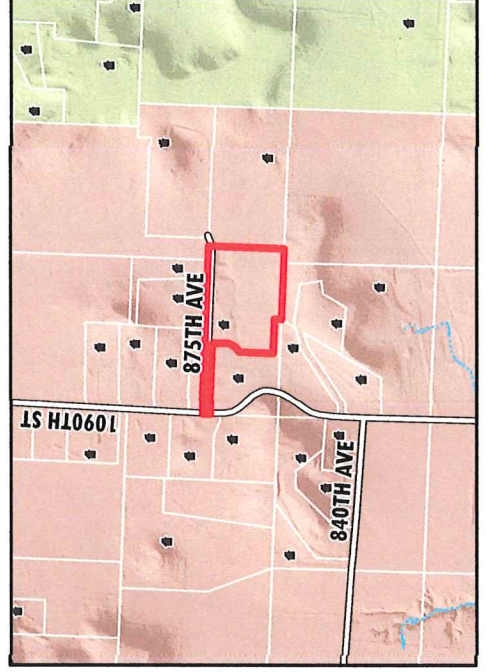
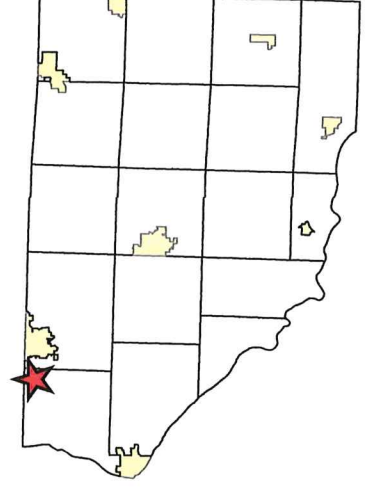
Orthophotography - 2021 Pierce County



Prepared by the Department of Land Management



Site Location
W10829 875TH AVE
TOWN OF CLIFTON



0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles



Belle Âme Vineyard Business Plan Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Belle Âme Vineyard (Belle Vineyard Weddings and Events, LLC) has an architectural style of traditional Tuscany, an ancient region of Europe known for picturesque landscapes and one of the world's oldest and most sought-after wine regions. This sun-kissed property is set on an agricultural site with more than 2,500 grape vines. The site offers both outdoor and indoor event spaces overlooking the beautiful vineyards and is framed by rolling bluffs and mature trees.

Business operations will focus on events such as weddings and corporate gatherings. Additionally, this beautiful event center will offer tastings of wines, combining northern climate and imported grapes to develop custom and distinct wines for the purpose of sale. The wine will be bottled and processed off-site and shipped to Belle Âme Vineyard for sale as authentic goods.

To ensure a successful business, competition in the area was analyzed. Pricing, variety of service offerings, and guest accommodation are the competition's key categories that were assessed. Assessment findings were used to develop a composite of market needs, develop a robust business plan, and create a blueprint for scaled-renovations designed to capitalize on opportunities identified in the current market. Belle Âme Vineyard's focus is on building a world-class team that is well equipped to further develop the venue into one of the most sought after large-event locations in the region.

Company & Business Description

The venue will accommodate events of heterogeneous scale and scope. The goal is to provide an infrastructure framework offering elegance and versatility while avoiding over-design to provide our clients with an open canvas for custom wedding decor and ambiance to bring their vision for the event space to life. The ability to adapt to our clients' visions by hosting truly custom events is what will provide a competitive advantage and create brand equity in the market.

The focus of the Belle Âme Vineyard leadership team will be to host wedding events, utilizing the main building, pavilion, large patio, and the 13.3 outdoor acreage for a variety of events. While weddings are projected to provide the largest portion of revenue, hosting a range of events throughout the region's 4-seasons will allow the business to maximize revenue and support the marketing plan. Event types that fall within the latter category include the following:

- Corporate events
- Executive meetings and retreats
- Local business special events
- Large family gatherings
- Large graduation celebrations
- Holiday events
- Wedding vendor events and trunk shows
- Engagement parties
- Professional photography sessions
- Wine tasting and marketing events

A smaller portion of the revenue will be generated from the sale of the agricultural product, grapes, and private-label wine. Food purchased off-site or

catered to the location may be sold during business marketing events as a nominal source of revenue. The venue owners will not operate a kitchen, a departure from the previous business plan carried out by the owners of Belle Vinez.

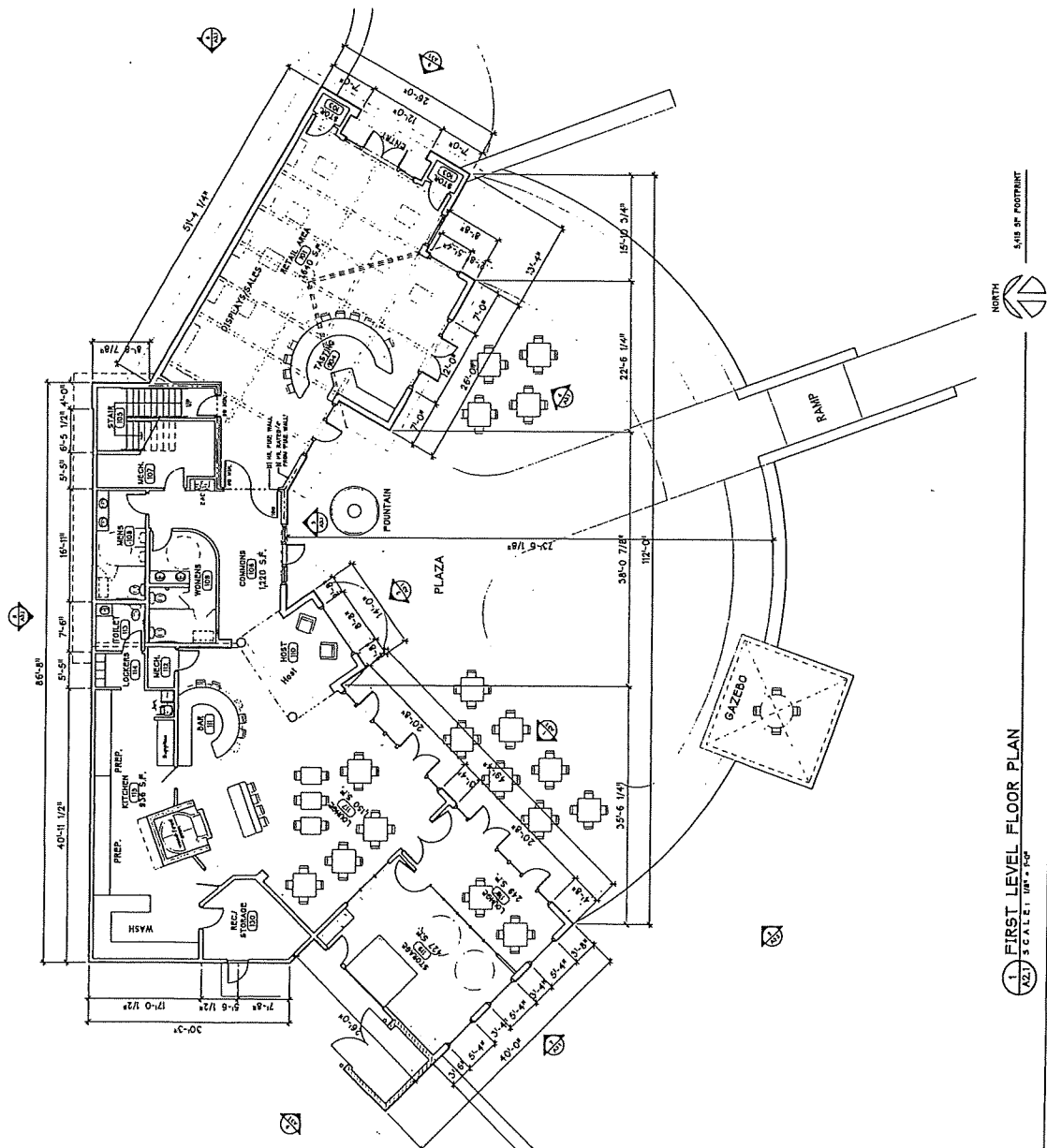
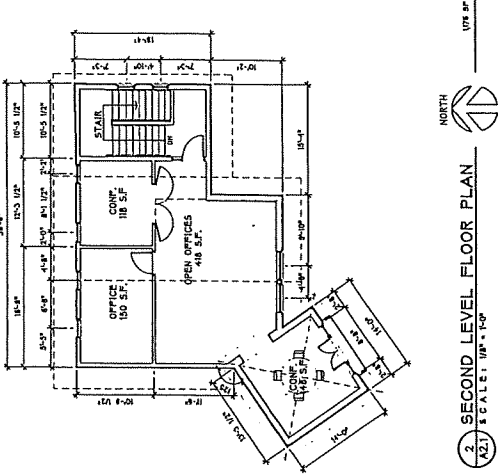
To ensure success and longevity, the leadership team will cultivate experts in the field to provide management, human resource, and consultative support for the business. Initially the business will operate with minimal overhead. Aside from the two owners and investors, Jack & Sasha Skendzel (legal members of the LLC), there will be two full-time, on-site, business managers, Samantha Wright and Sam Nelson. The managers will oversee operations, customer service, and marketing. A single part-time bartender will be employed for sale and dispensing wine on site, in accordance with the Liquor License agreement through the State of Wisconsin.

Mission & Vision

Mission: To create unforgettable memories in a space that inspires, captivates, and resonates the enchantment of human celebrations, reflecting the very essence of a single shared element of humanity; our beautiful souls. *Belle Âme*.

Vision: Provide our guests and community with a world-class event experience designed to build human relationships through indulgence, individual expression and creativity, and exceptional attention to detail

Existing Floor Plans



PRELIMINARY SET
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

R.I.S.B.I.E.
ARCHITECTS
110 S. WAVERLY STREET, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233

BELLEVINEZ
WINERY

TOWN OF
CLIFTON
WISCONSIN

PROJECT NO.

FLOOR PLANS

A2.1

15. DECEMBER 2010

STAFF REPORT LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Land Management Committee Meeting, March 1, 2023

Agenda Item 5

Applicant: John Grabrick (Big Dog Daddy's Roadhouse LLC)

Request: Discuss take action on a proposed Screening Plan for Resort Use

Background:

A Conditional Use Permit for a Resort on this property was approved on March 13, 2018. Subsequent CUP renewal have been approved on an annual basis but the resort use has not yet been established. The applicant has removed vegetation and prepared the resort for utility installations. Campsite utilities are planned to be installed soon with intent to open campsite operations this summer.

Because the property to the west of the site is residential development, a condition of the CUP is that a Screening Plan be submitted to the LMC for approval. The required screening must also be established before the resort may begin operations.

Issues Pertaining to the Request:

- The property is located in part of the NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of section 7, T24N, R17W, Town of Isabelle. The property is 5.45 acres and zoned General Rural and Commercial.
- Surrounding properties are zoned General Rural with the exception of a Commercial District that shares part of this property's west border.
- Surrounding land uses include residential to the west, DNR land to the east, and the Red Wing Airport to the north.
- The Land Management Minimum Landscaping Policy states "*vegetation, earthen berms, and or fencing shall be placed between nonresidential development and adjacent properties so as to render the development as visually unobtrusive, as is practical, from adjacent properties or from public view. Native vegetation should be utilized whenever practical. Vegetated screening buffers shall be maintained in good condition.*"
- The Screening Plan proposes 270' of 6' tall pressure treated dog ear panel fencing (see attached photo) that will be constructed along the western property line. The fence will begin 100' from the southern property line.
- The owner has also proposed a pyramidal arborvitae hedge be planted in a single row extending from the northern end of the fence for additional screening. The trees will be planted about 3-4 feet apart for a total length of 30 feet. Pyramidal arborvitae has a growth rate of approximately 1-2 feet per year and matures around 18-25' tall and 3-5' wide. Initial plantings will be approximately 3-4 feet tall.
- Arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) are native to the Northwoods areas of Wisconsin and Minnesota.
- The DNR recommends using red or white pine at 6 foot spacing instead because deer will eat arborvitae.

Applicant: John Grabrick
Screening Plan Review
March 1, 2023

- The arborvitae screening is not explicitly shown in the proposed screening site plan diagram.
- The northern half of the neighboring property to the west is wooded and is a zoned Commercial. No screening is proposed along this portion of the property.
- The intent of the submitted Screening Plan is to screen/buffer the resort cabins and campsites from the neighboring residential use of the property to the west.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Land Management Committee review the proposed Screening Plan and determine if it is sufficient to render the resort use “visually unobtrusive” from the adjacent residential use or whether changes or additions are warranted. If no changes or additions are warranted, the Screening Plan should be approved as proposed.







Submitted By: Jesse Stenske
Zoning Specialist

Land Management Committee

BIG DOG DADDY'S ROADHOUSE LLC
(March 1, 2023)

SCREENING PLAN FOR RESORT

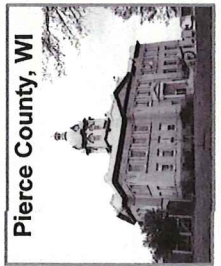
Legend

-  Dwellings
-  Resort CUP
-  Parcels
-  Contours (10ft)
-  100 Yr Floodway/
No Base Elev. Det
-  Red Wing Airport

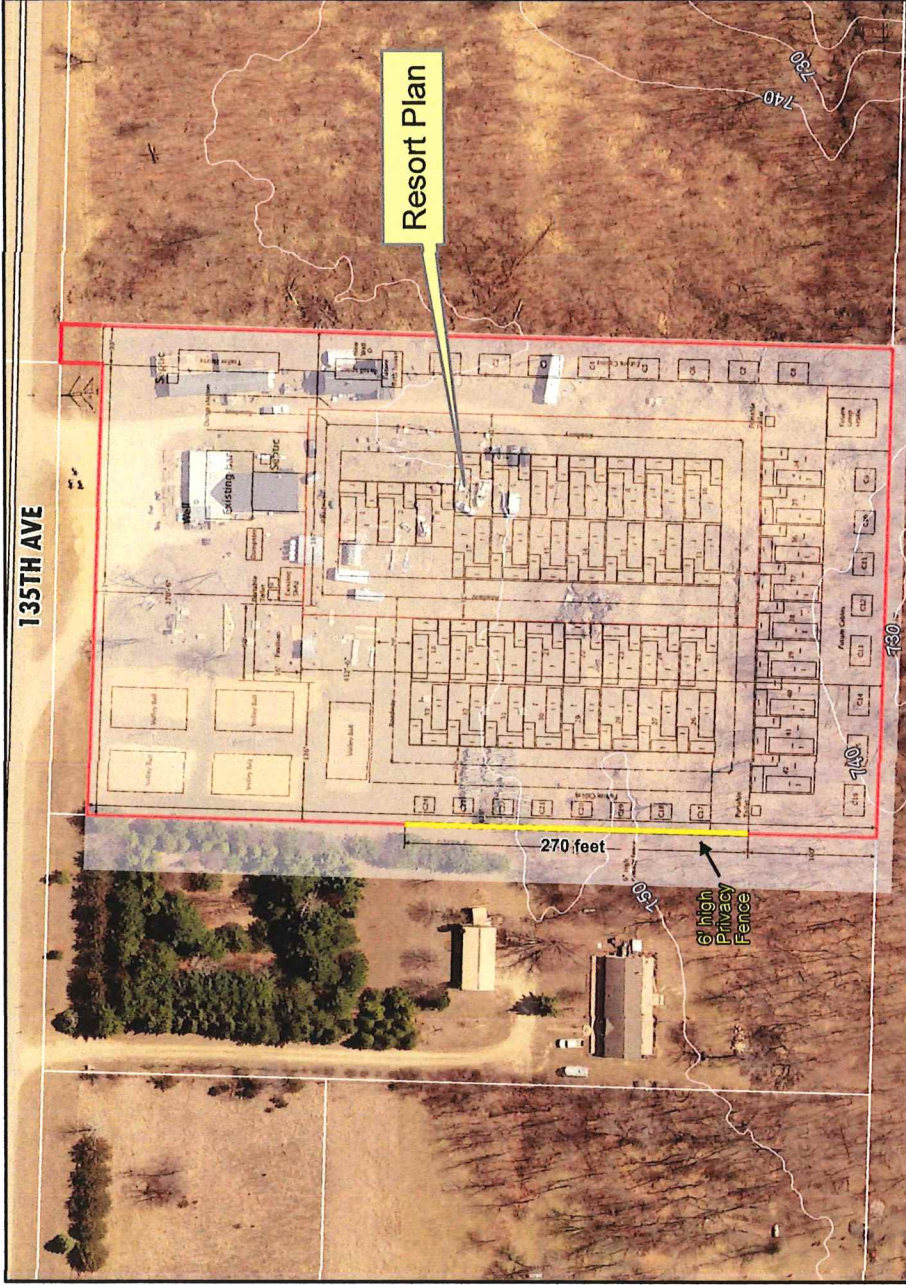
Zoning

-  Commercial
-  General Rural
-  Rural Residential - 20

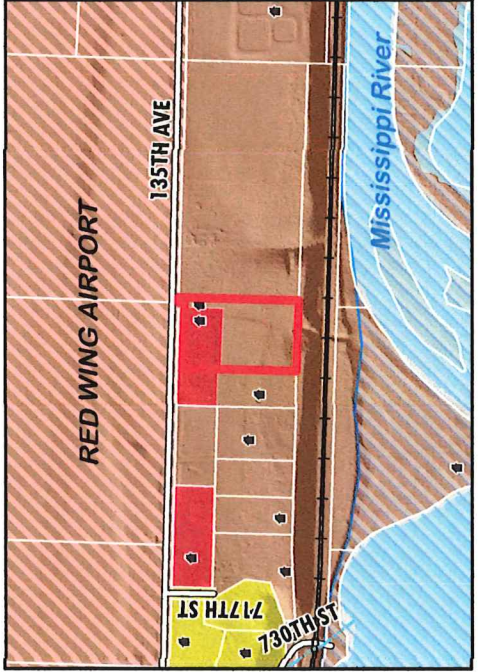
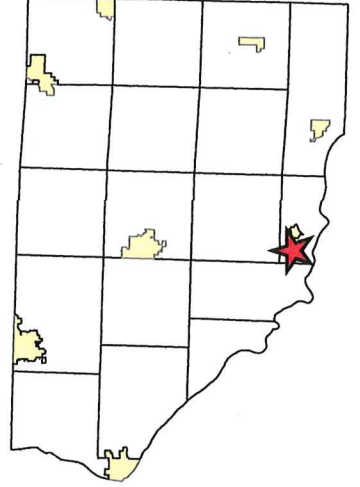
Orthophotography - 2021 Pierce County

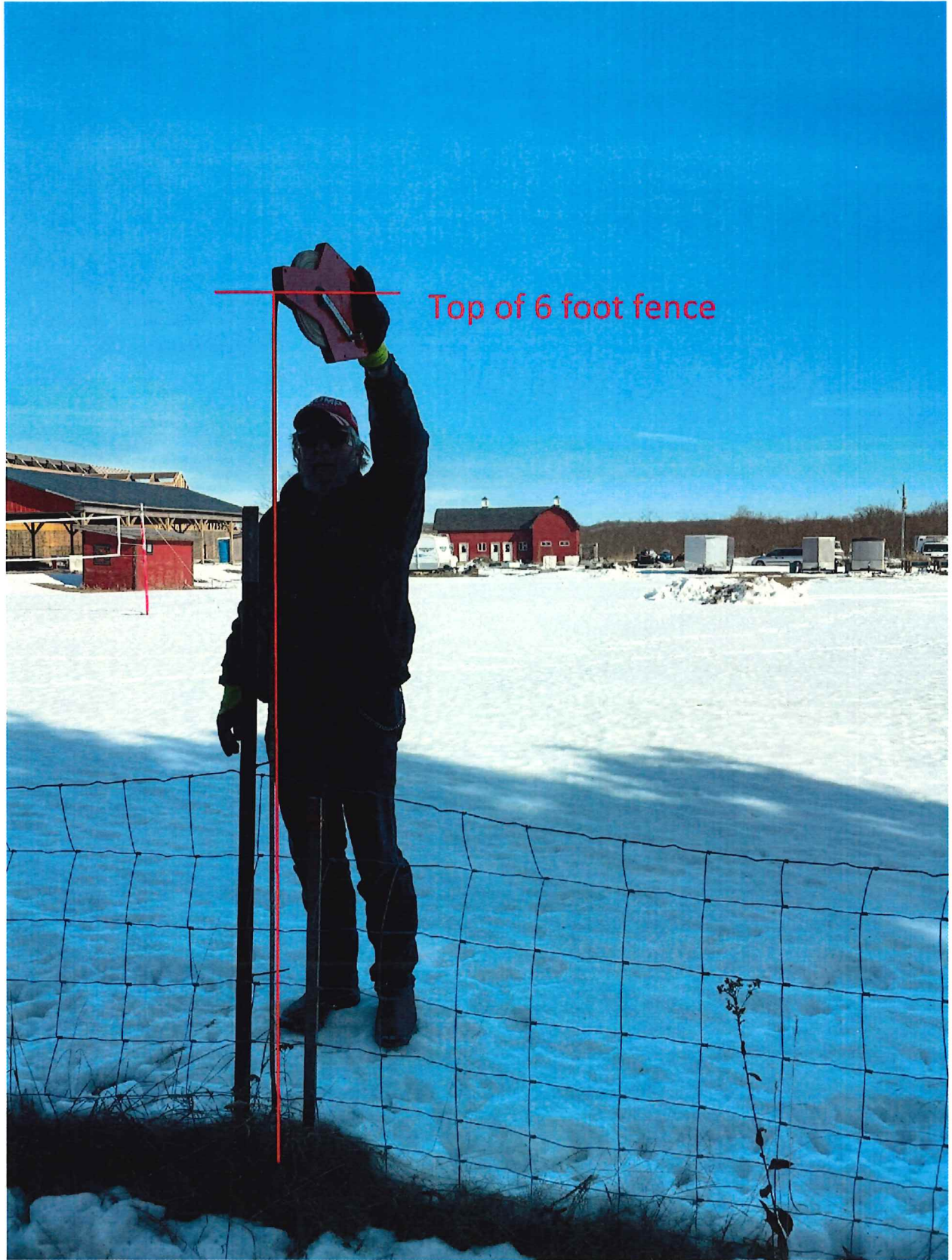


Prepared by the Department of Land Management

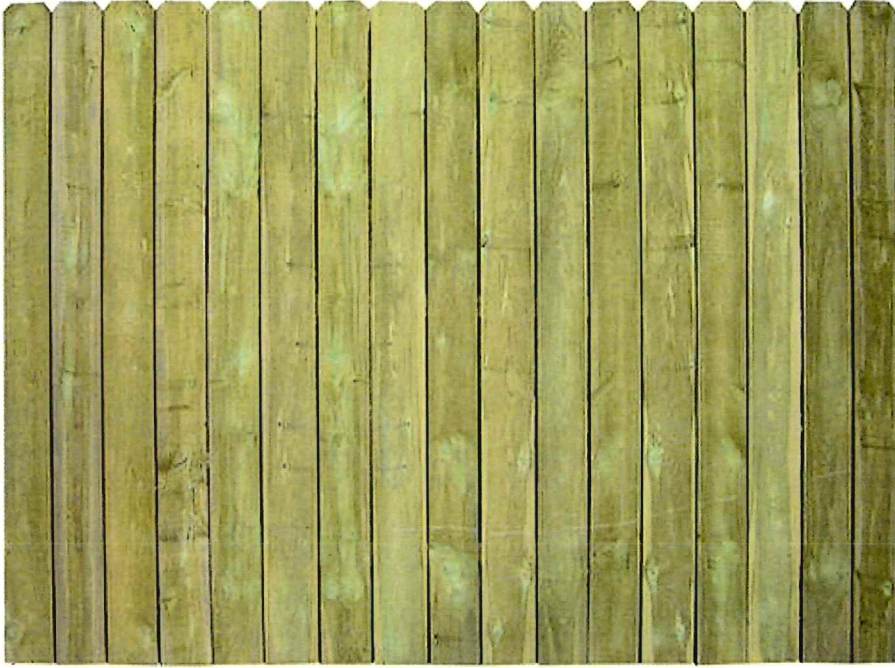


Site Location
W7037 135TH AVE
TOWN OF ISABELLE





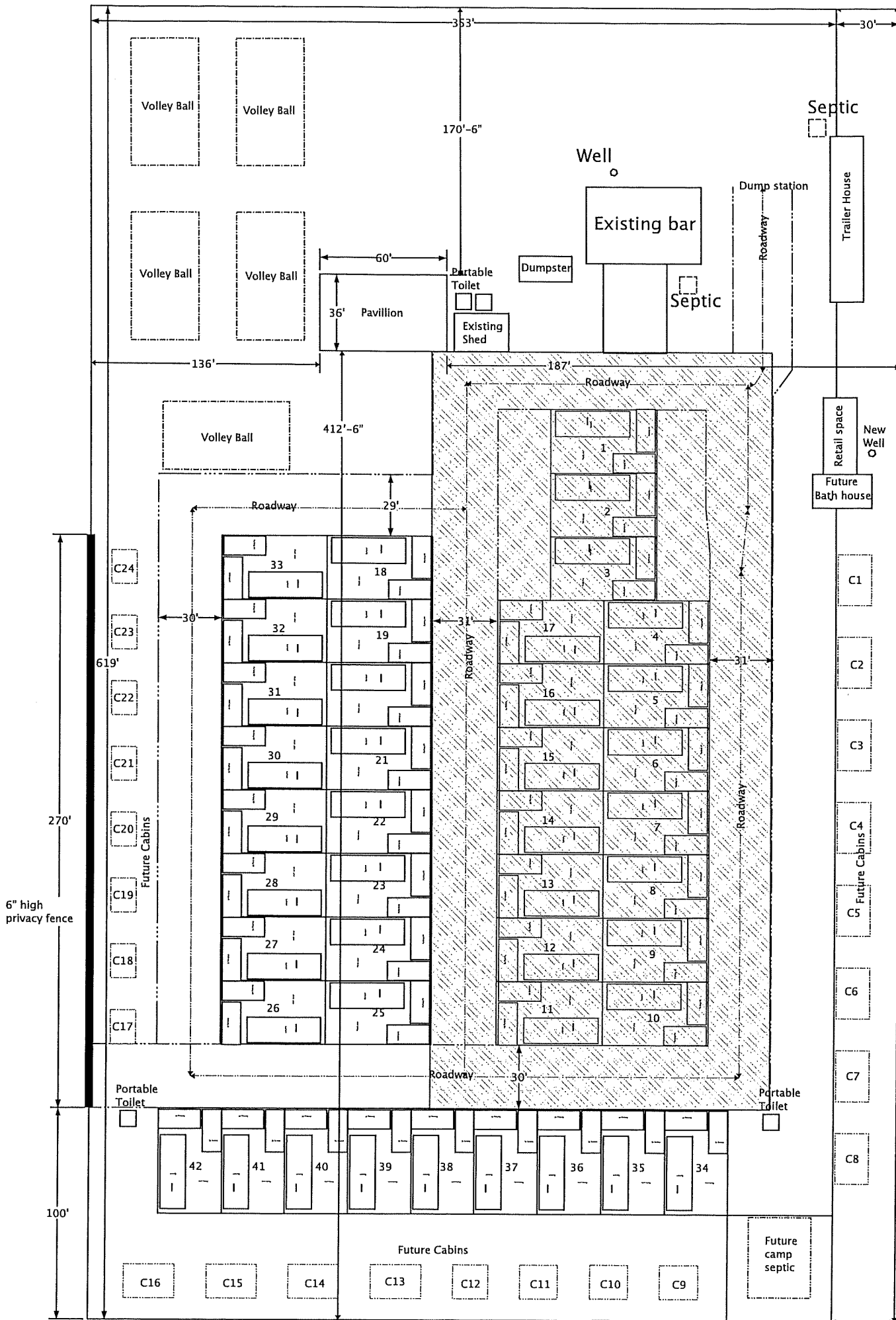
Top of 6 foot fence



Proposed fence style – Treated dog ear panels from Menard's, 6' tall x 8' long



Arborvitae



SCALE 1"=30'

**BIG DOG DADDY'S
ROADHOUSE & RESORT**

STAFF REPORT LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Land Management Committee Meeting,

March 1, 2023

Agenda Item 6

Applicant: Pierce Pepin Solar, LLC (agent) & Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (owner)

Request: Discuss and take action on a proposed Vegetation Establishment & Management Plan

Background:

The applicants obtained a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Large Solar Energy System from the Land Management Committee (LMC) on January 4, 2023. The CUP is for the construction of a 2-megawatt alternating current (MWac), East-West tracking ground mounted solar generating facility. Pierce Pepin Solar, LLC is a fully owned subsidiary of OneEnergy Renewables and will develop, construct, own, and operate the project.

The CUP was approved with 19 conditions. Two conditions related to this request are listed below:

- A minimum 50-foot vegetative buffer (consisting of existing trees and vegetation) shall be maintained between the facility and adjacent properties and road right-of-ways. If existing vegetation is inadequate to serve as a buffer, new plantings of trees, shrubs and grasses shall be established. The majority of the vegetative buffer shall have a minimum height of the project exterior fence. Initial plantings shall render the facility visually unobtrusive from adjacent properties and public view. Vegetative buffer requirement may be waived/modified with the consent of the adjacent property owner. Notice of consent shall be submitted to the zoning office (CUP condition 3); and,
- A vegetative management plan shall be developed for the site and it shall be reviewed and approved by the Land Management Committee. The applicant shall work with the Land Conservation Department in developing the plan. The plan shall include trees and shrubs, seed mixes, vegetation maintenance, and weed controls for the vegetative buffer, facility construction as well as facility operations (CUP condition 5).

The applicants submitted a Vegetation Establishment & Management Plan as part of the CUP conditional approval and would like the LMC to discuss and take action on their plan.

Issues Pertaining to the Request:

- The property is described as Lot 1 CSM V12 P20 being part of the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 28, T25N, R18W, Town of Trenton, Pierce County, WI.
- The parcel is 16.033-acres and is zoned General Rural Flexible. Adjacent properties are zoned Industrial, Commercial, General Rural Flexible, and Agriculture-Residential.
- The applicants obtained a driveway permit from the Pierce County Highway Dept. Then on 2-13-2023, they obtained a site address from the Land Management Dept. that is N2335 Cty Rd K.
- This parcel's land use was forested until approximately 2018 when the red pine timber was harvested. Since then, the land use changed to agriculture and corn was grown last year.
- Surrounding land uses are agricultural, woodland, and residential.

- The majority of the project area is located on Forkhorn sandy loam soils that are 2-6% slopes. There are no WI DNR mapped wetlands or floodplain in the project area. The Trimbelle River is located northwest of the parcel.
- Pierce County Code § 240-31 regarding Landscape buffers states:
 - A. Purpose. These requirements are intended to reduce potential adverse impacts that a particular land use might have on occupants of adjacent properties, such as glare of lights, dust, litter and appearance. With vegetative screening, such adverse impacts will be lessened.
 - B. Applicability. Landscape buffer requirements shall only apply to proposed uses in cases where a commercial or industrial use abuts a residential or agricultural district; where a utility use requiring a land use permit abuts any district; or such landscape buffer is required by a provision in this chapter. Commercial and industrial parcels which are developed as of the effective date of this chapter are exempt from this provision, except such parcels shall comply when the parcel is expanded in size or the use expands to an adjacent parcel which was previously undeveloped for such use.
 - C. General requirements.
 - (1) Landscape buffers shall be located in such manner that principal buildings and outdoor storage areas associated with the proposed use are screened as viewed from the vantage point of the principal structures on affected adjoining lots.
 - (2) Landscape buffers may be located in an area devoted to meeting minimum side or rear yard requirements.
 - (3) Landscape buffers, when required, shall be established on a lot at the time of the lot's development or at the time the use of the lot is changed to a use which requires a landscape buffer.
 - (4) Landscape buffers shall be provided on each lot as required by this section independent of existing landscape buffers on adjoining lots.
 - (5) Installation and maintenance of the required landscape buffers shall be the responsibility of the owner of the lot.
 - (6) Existing woody plants which meet the requirements listed in Subsection D may be used to meet the landscape buffer requirements.
 - D. Landscape buffer tree requirements. Landscape buffers, at the time of establishment, shall meet the design specifications on file in the Zoning Office as approved and incorporated into this chapter.
- The Land Management Minimum Landscaping Policy was adopted on adopted February 7, 2007 addresses screening for nonresidential development. The policy states, "Vegetation, earthen berms and or fencing shall be placed between nonresidential development and adjacent properties so as to render the development as visually unobtrusive, as is practical, from adjacent properties or from public view. Native vegetation should be utilized whenever practical. Vegetated screening buffers shall be maintained in good condition."
- The 50-foot vegetative buffer has been waived by the north and west adjacent property owners and documentation has been submitted to the Land Management Department.

- The attached site plan has an updated solar facility layout, vegetative buffer (CUP condition 3), and setbacks to roads and lot lines (CUP condition 4). The ground mounted solar generation facility will be constructed with an 8 ft tall agricultural-style fixed knot wildlife exclusion fence to surround the perimeter and provide security to the solar panels. After the solar facility is constructed, vegetation and screening will be established and maintained outside and inside the fenced perimeter.
- Outside the fenced area: There will be a 50-foot vegetative buffer outside the fenced area that extends 2,080 feet along State Hwy 35 and County Rd K. The applicants have proposed a staggered double-row vegetative buffer with 4-foot evergreen trees and shrubs that will be planted 30 feet apart.

The first row near to the road will be North Star white spruce or equivalent evergreen tree. The second row will be a native shrub, such as highbush cranberry or Allegheny serviceberry. A mulch ring will be placed around the trees and shrubs to help retain moisture and prevent weed growth. The applicants will water trees when necessary during the first growing season. They will inspect the trees and shrubs annually to ensure they remain healthy.

- Inside the fenced area: The soil inside the fenced area that surrounds the solar panels and devices will be planted with pollinator and pasture friendly vegetation. The following is proposed:
 - Clearing: Existing site materials will be removed. An herbicide application may be necessary to remove undesirable vegetation. If residual herbicides are present from the agriculture use, a temporary cover crop (annual rye, winter wheat, oats, etc.) will be planted before permanent seeding based on the WDNR Technical Standard 1059 and the WisDOT seeding specification 630.
 - Permanent seeding: Grasses will be seeded and raked. Then wildflowers will be seeded and raked. The pasture grasses, clover, and native prairie species grow at or below 30 inches so the solar panels are not shaded. The CUP supplemental information stated the pollinator seed would be planted approximately 10.5 lb/ac (61.4 seeds/ft²). Appendix B lists the specific plant species used.
 - Vegetation management: After vegetation is established, rotational sheep grazing is proposed instead of mowing. The fenced area will be divided into paddocks. The sheep will graze 3-5 days per paddock and removed for a 45-day rest period for vegetation regrowth.

From 1-5 years after vegetation growth, each paddock will be grazed 2 or 3 times per year to control invasive species and new plant competition. The site will be inspected 3 times a year to monitor vegetation growth and competition. Hand weeding, herbicide spot spraying, or spot mowing with a flail mower may occur to control weeds and invasive plants.

From 6-25 years, the pollinator meadow should be well established. The site will be inspected annually each spring. The site will be mowed or grazed 1 time per year late summer or early fall.

- Land Conservation Department Director Rod Webb met with a representative from OneEnergy Renewables and reviewed their draft Vegetation Establishment & Management Plan. Mr. Webb noted that the northwest portion of the property is a sensitive area for protecting the Trimbelle River with sediment erosion control measures and early plant establishment. The Land Conservation Department will visit this property in Spring 2023 to identify any potential direct conduits to the Trimbelle River and may recommend installing a cool season grass buffer adjacent to the Trimbelle River.

Pierce Pepin Solar, LLC / Pierce Pepin Co-Op Services
Vegetative Manage Plan
March 1, 2023

- The Land Management Department staff contacted the WI DNR Forester, Justin Kania, to review their proposed Vegetative Management Plan. He stated, “We have a bad spruce disease in the county. Only Norway Spruce, which is non-native, is disease resistant. I would plant red pine instead.”

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the LMC review the proposed Vegetation Establishment & Management Plan to determine whether the vegetative buffer plan provides sufficient screening to render the use “visually unobtrusive” and whether the vegetation management plan provides sufficient details for vegetation establishment and maintenance or whether additions or modifications are necessary. If no additions or modifications are warranted, the Vegetation Establishment & Management Plan should be approved as proposed.










Submitted By: Emily Lund
Assistant Zoning Administrator

Land Management Committee

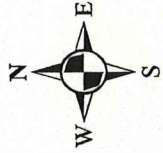
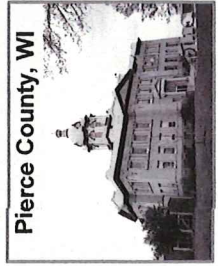
Pierce Pepin Solar, LLC
(March 1, 2023)

Vegetative Management Plan

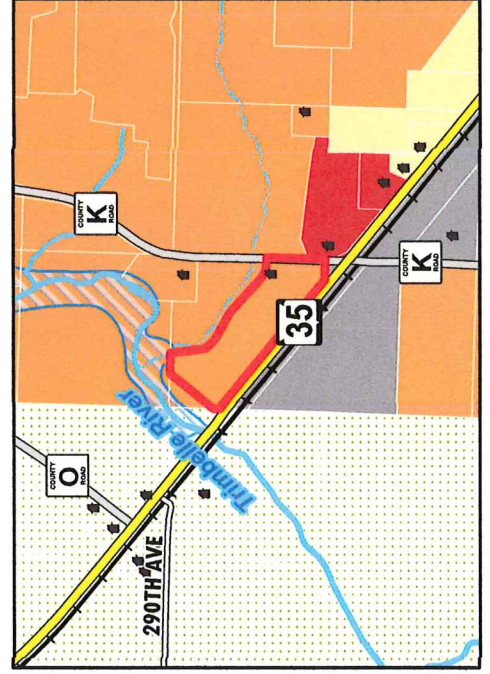
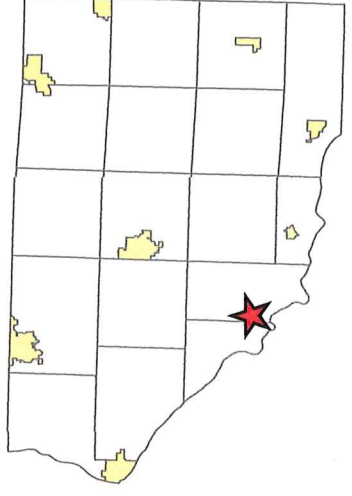
Legend

-  Dwellings
-  Parcel Site
-  Parcels
- Zoning**
-  100 Yr Floodway/
No Base Elev. Det
-  Agriculture - Residential
-  Commercial
-  General Rural Flexible
-  Industrial
-  Rural Residential - 8

Orthophotography - 2021 Pierce County

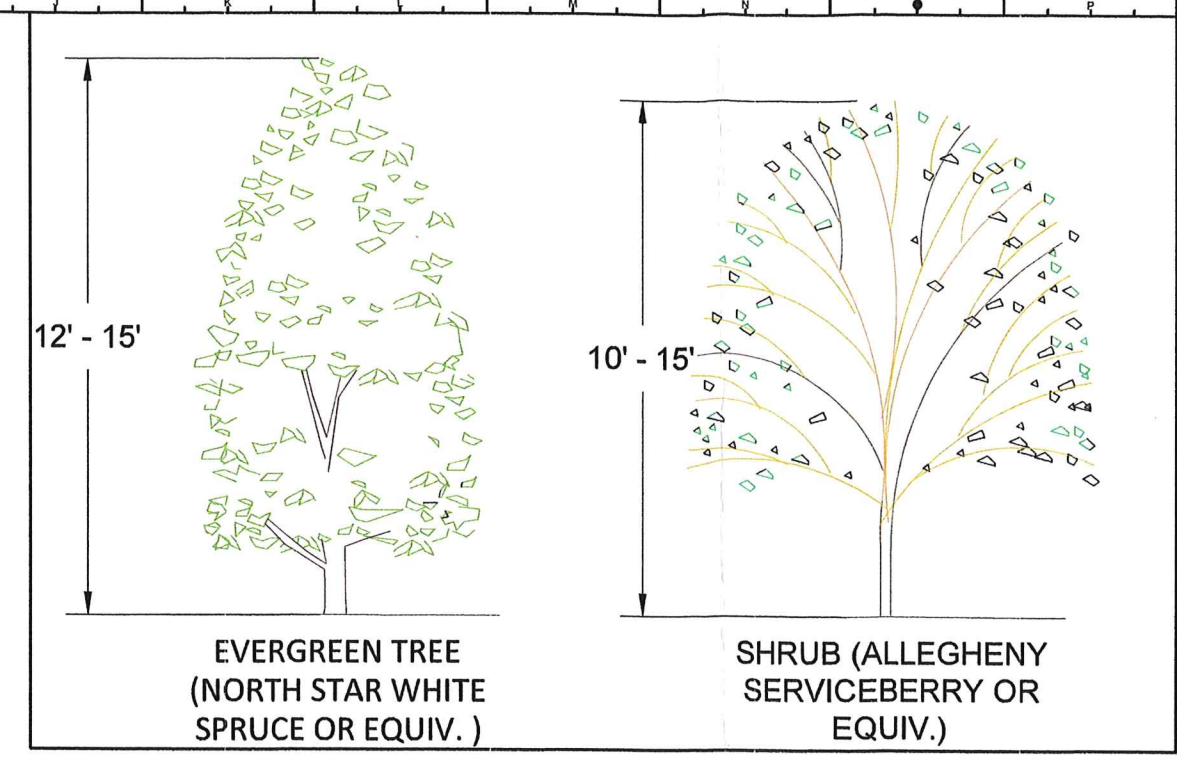


Site Location
N2335 COUNTY ROAD K
TOWN OF TRENTON

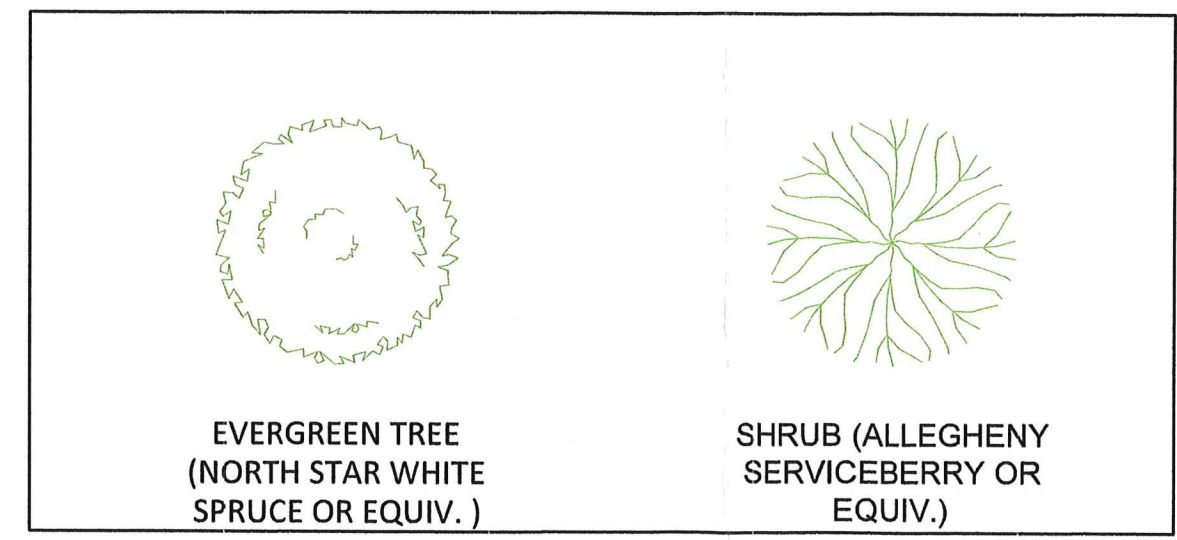




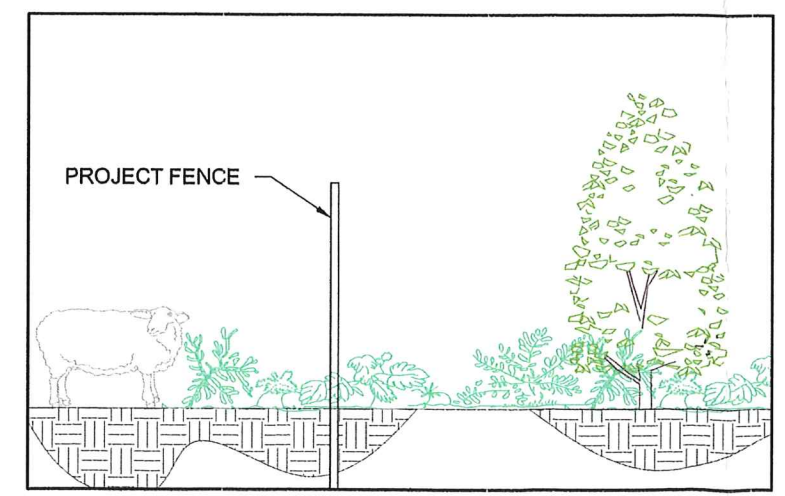
1 SITE PLAN VIEW
SCALE: 1" = 80'



2 VEGETATION ELEVATION VIEW
SCALE: NTS



3 VEGETATION PLAN VIEW
SCALE: NTS



4 PASTEUR MIXTURE SHEEP GRAZING
SCALE: NTS

LEGEND

- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- - - ZONING SETBACK
- - - UTILITY SETBACK
- ○ ○ ○ PERIMETER FENCE (N)
- UGMV UG MV
- OHU OH ELECTRICAL (N)
- UGE UG ELECTRICAL (E)

OneEnergy
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206 922 7072

WRITTEN DIMENSIONS ON THIS PLAN SHALL SUPERSEDE SCALED DIMENSIONS. CONTRACTORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FIELD VERIFYING ALL DIMENSIONS. THIS DRAWING, DESIGN, CONCEPT AND ARRANGEMENTS REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF ONEENERGY RENEWABLES AND SHALL NOT BE COPIED, DEVELOPED OR REPRODUCED WITHOUT CONSENT.

TRIMBELLE SOLAR
PIERCE PEPIN SOLAR, LLC
46566456 - 05/15/2022
TRENTON, VA

PRELIMINARY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

REVISION LOG

REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHKD	PHI
A	CONCEPT VEGETATION SCREEN DETAIL	02.02.23	AL	SG	BE
B	CONCEPT VEGETATION SCREEN DETAIL - COUNTY FEEDBACK	02.15.23	SJ	SG	BE

SHEET TITLE: **VEGETATION**

SHEET NO: **A-101**
DATE: 02.15.2023
PHI: EU ENG: IT

Vegetation Establishment and Management Plan



Date: 1/27/2023

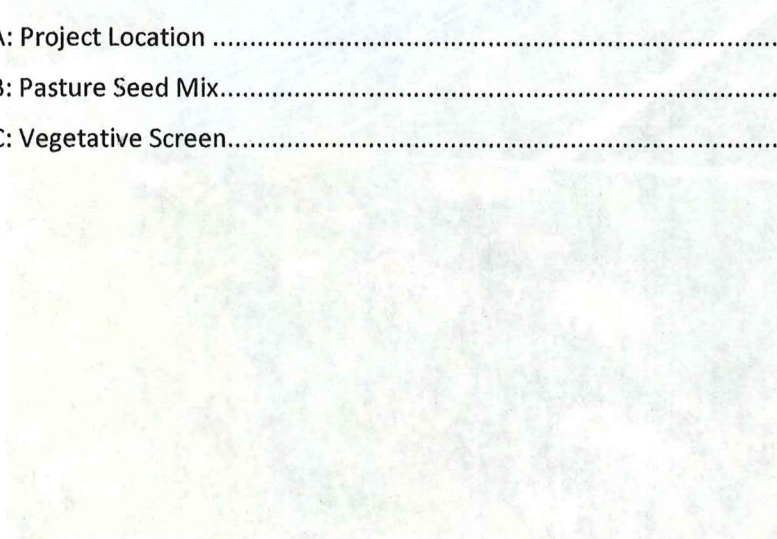
Project: Trimbelle Solar

Site Location: Hager City, Pierce County, WI

Owner: OneEnergy Development, LLC

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3	Site Preparation and Temporary Seeding	4
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1 Site Overview

Trimbelle Solar is a 2 MWac ground mounted solar project with a proposed project area of 14 acres (See Appendix A). The site was cleared for timber within the past 5 years and is currently in agricultural production. The most recent crop planted on site was corn. The land is relatively flat, and 94.3% of the soil on site is Forkhorn sandy loam with 2 to 6% slopes. The remainder of the site is comprised of Dakota silt loam and Plainfield sand, which only occur along the outer boundary of the site and will likely not be impacted by the solar array. There are no wetlands on site. The nearest surface water is the Trimbelle River, which is 260' from the Northwest border, and the surrounding area is forested. Following construction of the solar array, pollinator-friendly pasture vegetation will be established across the entire project area within the perimeter fence, and vegetation will be managed using sheep grazing.

2 Benefits of Grazing

Sheep are an ideal animal for grazing among solar panels. Finding shade can be difficult in many pastures, but grazing sheep beneath panels provides ample shade to keep the animals comfortable and sheltered. This ensures that sheep graze the vegetation more evenly, since the sheep are not congregated around a small number of trees or structures providing shade.

Replacing lawnmowers with sheep at solar sites lowers maintenance costs and emissions from mowing equipment. Sheep pose less of a risk to the panels than mowing equipment, which has the potential to launch rocks or run into panels or wiring. The height of sheep does not interfere with panel productivity or cause damage because the lower edge of the panels is 30" off of the ground at its lowest point. Sheep graze with their heads continuously to the ground and are not inclined to lean or rub against the piles supporting the panels or other equipment. Since sheep target many invasive and weedy species, there is a reduced need for herbicide, which protects vegetation management contractors and the local ecosystem.

In addition to benefiting the sheep, high-intensity rotational grazing improves the quality of soil. Grazing increases microbial diversity in the soil, recycles nutrients, and sequesters carbon into the soil. Restoring grassland also reduces stormwater runoff and erosion. Grazing rotationally supports plant diversity, and incorporating native flowering plant species into the seed mix provides important forage and habitat for native pollinators and birds. Regenerative grazing with sheep on solar sites not only keeps land in agricultural production, but it benefits future farming once the solar array is removed.

The benefits of solar grazing extend to the local ecosystem as well. Rotational grazing supports plant diversity and reduces the presence of invasive species. Incorporating native flowering plant species in the seed mix provides important forage and habitat for native pollinators and birds.

3 Site Preparation and Temporary Seeding

Construction debris and building materials will be cleared from the seeding area. An herbicide application may be required to remove undesirable vegetation from the site. The type of herbicide used will depend on the target species observed during inspections by environmental specialists. If an herbicide such as glyphosate is used, this would necessitate a 10-day waiting period before disturbing the soil or seeding.

A cover crop of annual rye, winter wheat, oats, or a combination of these species will be used as a cover crop depending on the time of year and based on the WDNR Technical Standard (1059) and the WisDOT seeding specification (630). If residual herbicides are likely present from prior agricultural use, a cover crop will be used before seeding with native prairie species.

4 Permanent Seeding

The soil will be disced and then either harrowed or raked to prepare the soil for seeding. Grasses will be seeded using a mechanical broadcast spreader at a depth of ¼ to ½-inch. Following grass seeding, the site will be raked and harrowed. Wildflowers and sedges will be seeded using a mechanical broadcast spreader and covered by raking the site.

The seed mix contains a combination of pasture grasses, clovers, and native prairie species, such as sideoats grama and gray goldenrod. Native prairie species will provide habitat for local wildlife and support pollinators, while the grasses and clovers provide nutritious forage for sheep. All of these species reach maximum heights at or below 30" to prevent the panels from being shaded.

An example seed mix for this site can be found in Appendix B. The final seed mix for Trimbelle Solar may be modified by land management and grazing specialists, and changes to plant species and their proportions in the mix will depend on site-specific soil and microclimate conditions and seed availability at the time of planting.

5 Vegetation Maintenance and Grazing

Specific maintenance activities and timing will depend on observations during site inspections. A suggested timeline for vegetation management is provided in Section 7. Vegetation Maintenance Reports (VMR) will be completed during each site visit to record the amount of vegetation cover, vegetation height, invasive or undesirable plant species present, and blooming species. Recommended next steps will be noted, and management plans remain flexible to reflect changes in vegetation and weed pressure.

Once continuous vegetation cover has been established, high intensity rotational sheep grazing will be used to manage vegetation in place of mowing. The project area within the perimeter fence will be divided into paddocks. Sheep will typically rotate between paddocks every 3-5

days with a 45-day rest period to allow vegetation regrowth and limit the spread of parasites. The grazing period will vary seasonally and will depend on plant phenology and sheep stocking density. During the establishment period, which spans ~5 years after seeding, grazing should occur 2-3 times per year. Following this establishment period, the site will be grazed yearly to control invasive species and limit biomass to reduce competition for native grass and forb species.

6 Invasive and Weed Species Management

In addition to the removal of invasive species, plant species will be suppressed if they are likely to either outcompete the native species planted or grow to a height that would potentially shade the solar panels. Sheep eat most invasive and weedy plant species, but control of these species may also include spot-spraying, spot-mowing, hand weeding, wicking, or other methods selected by contractors for the target species. Herbicide use should be restricted to prevent contact with native species as much as possible, and herbicides will not be used when wind speeds exceed 10 mph to prevent drift.

If herbicide use is necessary, glyphosate or triclopyr will likely be used for spot-treatment. Glyphosate is non-selective and remains in the soil for several weeks, and triclopyr targets broadleaved species and remains in the soil for 30 days. Other herbicides may be utilized based on the target species observed and identified for management. Actual herbicide prescriptions will be identified by site inspectors, and recommended time restrictions will be observed before returning sheep to graze the site following herbicide applications.

The site will be inspected annually each spring, and spot-mowing or invasive species removal will be completed as needed. If biomass removal is needed, the site will be grazed or mowed every three years using a flail mower. After the initial 5-year establishment period, the site should not be mowed or grazed more than once per year.

7 Vegetation Management Timeline

Year 0		
Seedbed Preparation	Herbicide application, soil bed preparation	Sep-Oct
Seeding	Site will be seeded with a temporary cover crop of annual rye or oats, followed by seeding with the pollinator-pasture mix.	November
Year 1		
Site Inspections	Three site inspections to monitor vegetation and complete VMRs. Plans will be made for any necessary reseeding, erosion mitigation, or invasive/weed species management.	Late April, mid-June, and late July

Mow	Site mowed to 8" vegetation height. Spot-treat weeds as needed. (Timing of mowing/grazing is dependent on plant phenology and invasive species/weed pressure, which will be evaluated during site inspections.)	Late-June to early-July
Graze	Site grazed to <8" vegetation height (if vegetation is sufficiently established). Spot-treat weeds as needed.	Late July to August
Years 2-5		
Site Inspection	Three site inspections to monitor vegetation and complete VMRs.	Late April, mid-June, and late July
1 st Graze	Site grazed to <8" height. Spot-treat weeds as needed.	Late June to early July
2 nd Graze	Site grazed to <8" height. Spot-treat weeds as needed.	Late July to August
Years 6-25		
Site Inspection	Annual visit to monitor vegetation in the spring. Spot-mowing or weed removal will be completed as needed based on inspections	April
Annual Graze	The site will be grazed annually to remove biomass and ensure that vegetation is kept below a height of 30".	Late June to August

8 Vegetative Screening

A buffer of tree and shrub species will be used to provide a barrier between the solar panels and the roadway. This buffer will span approximately 2,080' with a depth of 50' from Highway 35 and County Road K to the project perimeter fencing. The species selected for the vegetative screen will provide habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

The vegetative buffer will be made up of a combination of evergreens trees and native shrubs, and the 50' buffer area will also be seeded with the pollinator-friendly pasture mix. The evergreen species planted along this buffer will be either North Star white spruce (*Picea glauca* 'North Star') or equivalent, and a shrub species such as highbush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) or Allegheny serviceberry (*Amelanchier laevis*) will be planted between the evergreens (See Appendix C). Trees and shrubs will be spaced at least 30' apart and will be planted in a staggered line to give a more natural appearance.

Bare root planting is preferable for reducing transplant shock and is associate with a higher survival rate. If purchased balled and burlapped (B&B), trees and shrubs will be approximately 4' tall at planting.

Trees and shrubs will be watered and surrounded with a hardwood mulch ring to retain water after planting. Annual inspections will ensure trees and shrubs are healthy, and additional waterings may be required depending on weather conditions during the first growing season.

9 References

Wang, X., McConkey, B., VandenBygaart, A. *et al.* Grazing improves C and N cycling in the Northern Great Plains: a meta-analysis. *Sci Rep* 6, 33190 (2016).

de Ojalora, X.; Epelde, L.; Arranz, J.; Garbisu, C.; Ruiz, R.; Mandaluniz, N. Regenerative rotational grazing management of dairy sheep increases springtime grass production and topsoil carbon storage. *Ecol. Indicators*. 125, 107484 (2020).

Walston, L. et al. (2020) Modeling the ecosystem services of native vegetation management practices at solar energy facilities in Midwestern United States. *Ecosystem Services* (47), 101227. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2020.101227>.

Walston, L. et al. (2018). Examining the potential for agricultural benefits from pollinator habitat at solar facilities in the United States. *Environmental Science & Technology* 52 (13), 7566-7576. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.8b00020>.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Height
White-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	1.0
Black-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.7
Red-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.5
Orange-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.3
Yellow-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.2
Blue-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Green-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Pink-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
White-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Black-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Red-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Orange-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Yellow-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Blue-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Green-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
Pink-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1
White-flowered	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	0.1

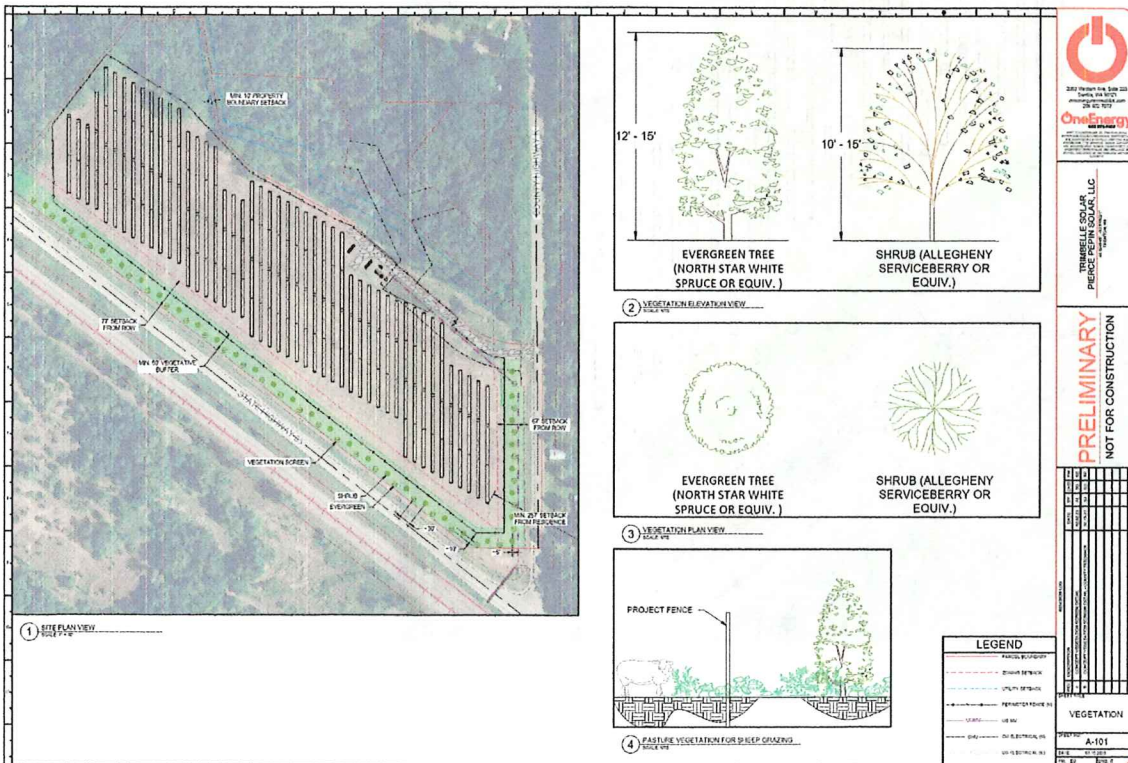
10 Appendix A: Project Location



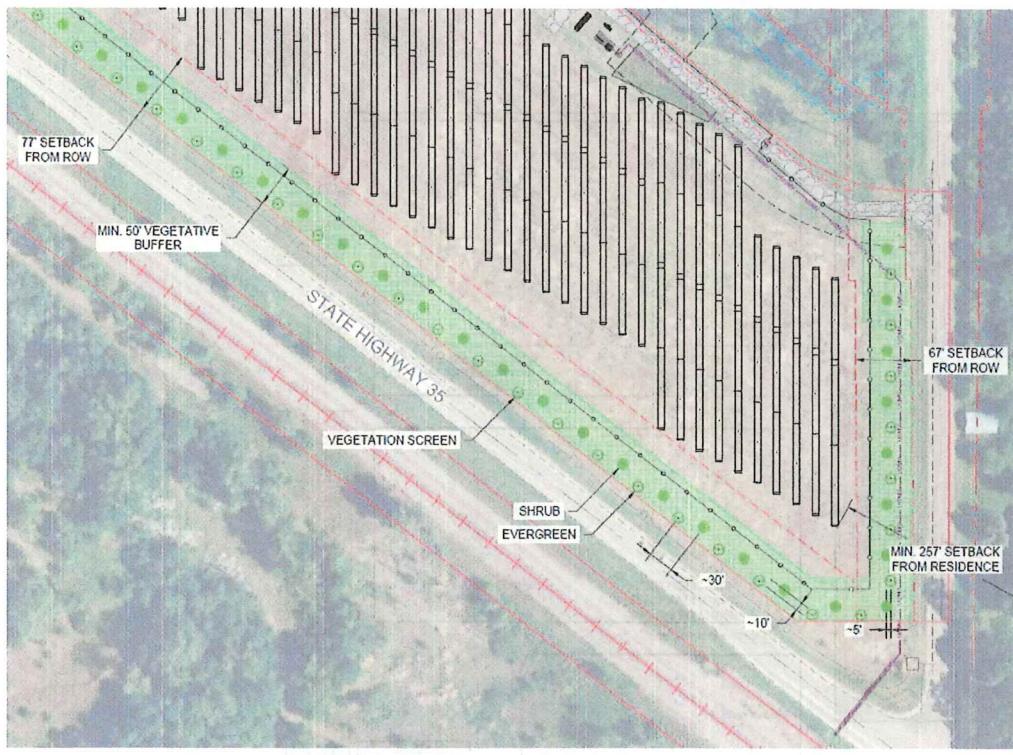
11 Appendix B: Pasture Seed Mix

Common Name	Scientific Name	Lbs./Acre
Grasses		
Alsike clover	<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>	1.0
Ladino clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	0.75
Medium red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	2.5
Kentucky bluegrass	<i>Proa pratensis</i>	6.0
Timothy	<i>Phleum pratense</i>	6.0
Crested wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron cristatum</i>	4.0
Blue grama	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	0.75
Sideoats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	2.0
Forbs		
Gray goldenrod	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	0.1
Black-eyed susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	0.05
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	0.02
Lanceleaf coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	0.1
Partridge pea	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	0.5

12 Appendix C: Vegetative Screen



VEGETATION



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