


Memorandum

DATE: September 17, 2020

TO: Village of Poplar Grove Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner 

SUBJECT: Staff advisory memo for case: 2020-05: Poplar Grove Solar, LLC, 4324 IL Route 173 (East Half)

REQUEST AND LOCATION:

The applicant, Poplar Grove Solar, PO Box 310, Highland Park, IL 60035, on behalf of the property owner, DYN 173, LLC (First Midwest Group), 6801 Spring Creek Road, Rockford, IL 61114, is requesting a special use to install non-building mounted solar collectors (total of 18 acres, eastern phase) for export of energy for use by an electrical utility at 4324 Illinois Route 173 within LI, Light Industrial District (Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance Sections 8-6-11-B-2 and 8-5-7 Special Use). Part of PIN: 03-14-300-002. The property is rectangular in shape and is currently being farmed. The solar farm will be on the northeastern part of the property away from Illinois Route 173. There is a cluster of single family residential to the east and a farmstead to the northwest. Please note that this is the same special use that was requested in 2018 but was never constructed.

BACKGROUND:

On November 14, 2018, the Poplar Grove Village Board approved Ordinance 2018-35 rezoning the northeastern part of PIN: 03-14-300-002 to Light Industrial and Ordinance 2018-36 approving an 18 acre solar farm. Rather than asking for a second extension of the previously approved special use, the applicant has resubmitted the special use for approval. The site plan and overall request has not changed since it was previously approved in 2018. It is anticipated that the State of Illinois will be releasing more funding for renewable energy projects such as the one being proposed. In order to be prepared for potential state funding, solar projects will need to have local approval in place.

The property was annexed into the Village of Poplar Grove in 2005. Additional land uses allowed within the Light Industrial District are vehicle related sales/services, light manufacturing/industrial and wireless communication facilities by right and rail transit stations, airports/heliports and indoor warehouse/wholesale by special use. Development in the light industrial district can create 65% lot coverage, buildings can be 50 feet in height and constructed 20 feet from the side lot line and 30 feet from the rear lot line.

Although traditional development is permitted 20 feet from the eastern property line and 30 feet from the northern property line, the solar panels will be constructed a minimum of 100 feet from the eastern property line and 30 feet from the northern property line.

The special use consists of Phase I of a two phase solar farm. Each phase is approximately 18 acres. The total project encompasses an area approximately 2,215 feet wide and 600 feet deep, not including access roads and power lines. The front portion of the property will remain in agricultural production. The projects are designed to be Community Solar projects, allowing residences and businesses to subscribe to use the electricity. The projects will be 2 MW AC each in size and are anticipated to power 600-800 homes. Once the projects are completed,

there will be minimal traffic generated from the routine monitoring and maintenance of the property.

The solar panels will be up to 12 feet in height and mounted into the ground on poles, not concrete pads. The panels will be configured in a north-south layout with the capability to rotate in order to track the sun throughout the day. There will be an anti-reflective coating placed on the panels to help minimize glare. Due to the mounting style of the solar panels, there will be minimal lot coverage; however, there will be a 6'x10' concrete pad for the transformer associated with each project as well as a set of three onsite poles that will convey power lines to the utility owned poles. Electrical collection lines will be underground and brought together for connection to the transmission network rather than directly to a substation. Security lighting is not anticipated to be used; there will, however, be a 7' chain link fence and warning signs around the perimeter of the projects.

The project has a 25-year design life and all equipment (above and below ground) will be required to be removed and the site restored per the approved decommissioning plan. The projects will be required to be landscaped with low maintenance plants that act as natural pollinators. These plantings shall be reviewed and approved by the Boone County Conservation District.

According to the Natural Resources Inventory Report (NRI) #1594 there is a drainage way on the western half of the property and agricultural drainage tiles that serve the properties to the west and north that traverse the western half of the subject property (Case 2020-06).

The adjacent property owners were sent certified notices on September 2, 2020 and the green cards have been returned. The request was published in the Boone County Journal on September 4, 2020. The appropriate village staff and other agencies were notified on September 2, 2020. No objections from the agencies were received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Per Section 8-5-7(D) of the Village of Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance, the criteria for granting a Special Use Permit are as follows:

- A. **Findings: The establishment, maintenance or operation of the special use would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare.**

There are many kinds of solar farms, each having their own set of environmental impacts. Solar farms can be thousands of acres in size. Some require that all vegetation be removed which impacts wildlife by loss of habitat; some are constructed on cement pads that increase surface water run-off; some radiate heat and some feed into a tower that can be dangerous for birds and insects. Phase I of the proposed solar farm will be 18 acres in size, have adequate vegetation, create minimal surface water run-off and is not anticipated to create a noticeable amount of heat or glare.

Considering the zoning of the property and the potential development that is permitted, the solar farms, with proper conditions of approval, would have less of an impact to neighboring properties. An increased setback is being utilized along the east property lines to provide an additional buffer between the projects and nearby residences. The addition of pollinating plants will benefit the community while providing a low maintenance vegetative cover rather than grass seed which can become unsightly.

- B. **Findings:** The special use would not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.

Industrial and limited commercial development is already permitted. The solar farm will be required to adhere to all local, state and federal regulations in addition to the conditions of approval. The height (and potential shadow casting) and lot coverage of the solar panels are less than the amount permitted while the setbacks are greater. The amount of traffic generated by the solar farm is less than that created by an industrial or commercial development.

Although the NRI report indicated agricultural drainage tiles on the western half of the property, through the special use process, a study can be conducted on the eastern half of the property. This will ensure that any potential agricultural drainage tiles are discovered and can now be protected.

- C. **Findings:** The establishment of the special use will not impede the normal or orderly development and improvements of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

The solar farms are not anticipated to impact the ability of the surrounding properties to be used agriculturally. The addition of pollinators is intended to be a benefit to the agricultural community. The solar farm is not anticipated to create additional heat, odor, light or noise that would infringe on the nearby residents' enjoyment of their properties.

- D. **Findings:** Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities will be provided.

The property is located along Illinois Route 173 which can adequately handle construction equipment and increased traffic during construction. Access roads, drainage and additional power lines and power poles will be installed by the developer in accordance to the project's needs and submitted narrative and site plan.

- E. **Findings:** Adequate measures have been taken to provide ingress or egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.

Once construction of the special use is complete, there will be minimal traffic generated by the routine maintenance and monitoring of the site. An access road will be wide enough to handle two-way traffic, for instance, when multiple vehicles are present.

- F. **Findings:** The special use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the districts in which it is located.

The special use will be required to conform to all the applicable regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, all other regulations and to any conditions of approval enacted by the Village Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

The planning staff recommends approval of case 2020-05 subject to following conditions:

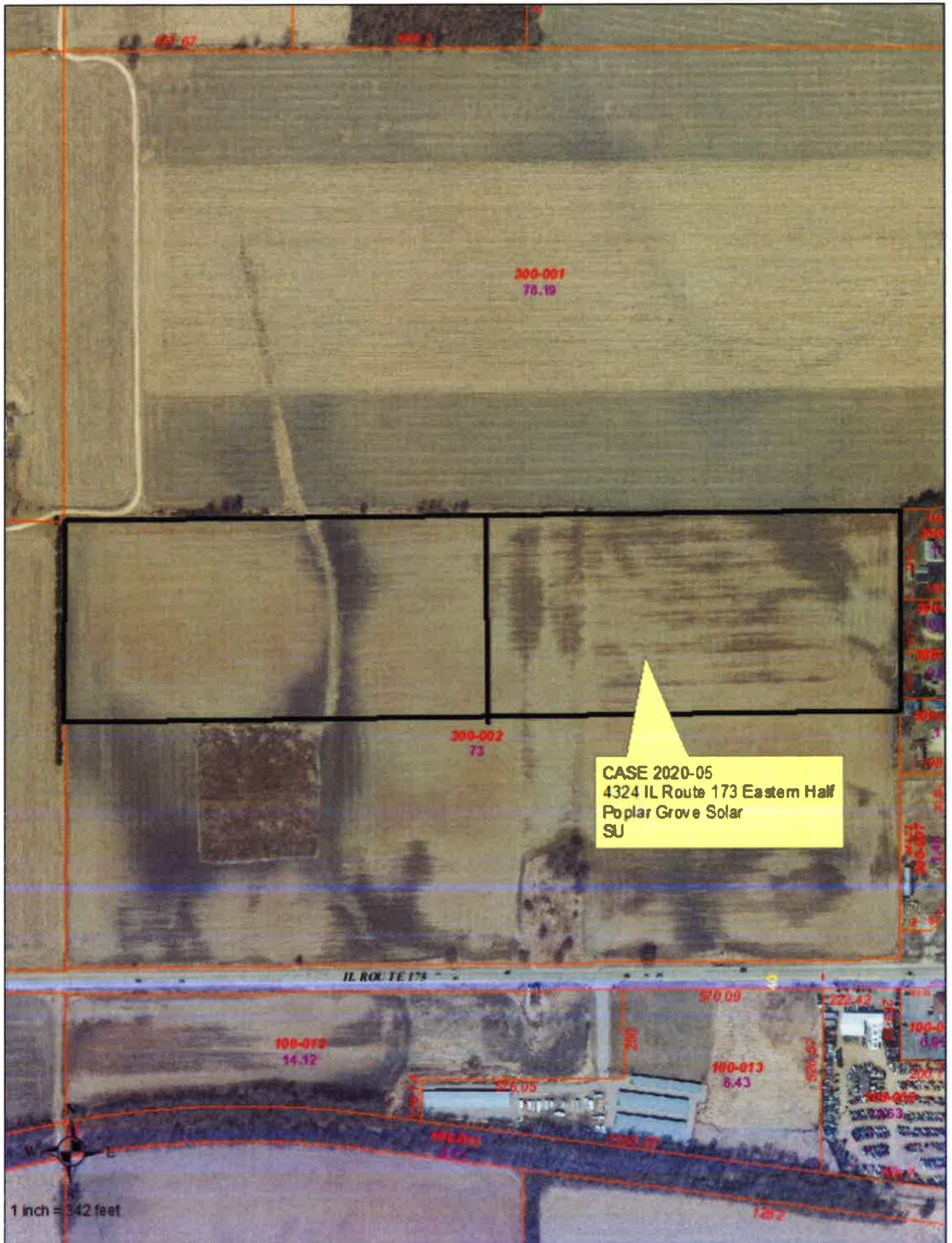
1. Substantial compliance with the narrative and site plan submitted, unless otherwise noted.
2. All vegetation shall be approved by the Boone County Conservation District. Pollinator friendly vegetation shall be used.
3. A decommissioning and reclamation plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Village of Poplar Grove prior to the commencement of the development.
4. A surety, covering the complete execution of the decommissioning and reclamation plan for when the project ends shall be posted prior to the commencement of the development.
5. An agricultural drainage tile system survey shall be conducted prior to commencement of the project. All identified drain tile shall be protected and repaired if damaged.
6. The applicant shall provide training to Boone County Fire District 3 pertaining to the hazards in conducting fire control and extinguishment of the proposed solar system.
7. Inspection risers shall be installed between PINs: 03-14-300-001 and 03-14-300-002 and Illinois Route 173

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION/VILLAGE BOARD ACTION

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall make and forward findings of fact as to the compliance of the proposed special use with the standards and make a recommendation to the Village Board. The Village Board shall review the findings and recommendation and may accept or reject the findings and recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission in whole or in part; or the Village Board may refer the matter back to the Planning and Zoning Commission for further consideration. Any approval shall be considered the approval of a unique request and not be construed as precedent for any other proposed special use.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map submitted by Planning Staff.
2. Aerial Photo submitted by Planning Staff.
3. Narrative submitted by the Applicant.
4. Site Plan submitted by the Applicant.
5. Site pictures from NRI #1594.
6. Overview and Opinion from NRI #1594.
7. Drainage way and agricultural drainage tile information from NRI #1594.
8. Letter from Boone County Health Department, Amanda Mehl, September 4, 2020.
9. EcoCat Result for IDNR Project 1900789.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Poplar Grove Solar – Phase 1

Poplar Grove Solar, LLC - Phase 1 (the “Applicant”) proposes to develop a community solar project approximately 2 MW AC in size, on approximately 17 acres of land located north of Illinois Route 173 and west of Fairgrounds Road in the Village of Poplar Grove, Boone County, Illinois. The Poplar Grove Solar, LLC community solar project (the “Solar Project”) will be located within a portion of the parcel with PIN 03-14-300-002 (the “Project Parcel”) owned by DYN 173, LLC (the “Landowner”). The Applicant is submitting this Petition for Special Use pursuant to and in compliance with the requirements set forth under Sections 8-5-4 and 8-5-7 of the Village of Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance (the “Zoning Ordinance”), as amended by the Applicant’s approved Text Amendment Submitted July 24th, 2017.

The proposed Solar Project will serve the electricity needs of 300 to 400 homes. Once installed and commissioned, the Solar Project will be continuously monitored, and engineers and maintenance technicians will visit the Solar Project a few times a year for routine maintenance and any required repairs. Post-construction, the Solar Project will generate minimal traffic, with visits to the site occurring solely in connection with routine and required maintenance.

About Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC

Poplar Grove Solar, LLC is a wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC. Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC brings together communities, organizations, and land owners to develop clean energy projects that are integrated into the local landscape and community.

The Future Energy Jobs Act and Community Solar Projects

Under Illinois Public Act 99-0906, commonly known as the Future Energy Jobs Act (“FEJA”), the Illinois Power Agency is currently promulgating a set of regulations and incentives to allow the creation of such community solar projects. The Solar Project is intended to be a community solar project under FEJA, which would allow residential and commercial customers to subscribe to the Solar Project. The Solar Project will support FEJA’s goals of increasing the adoption and availability of renewable energy to Illinois residents and businesses.

Economic and Environmental Benefits

The Solar Project will provide economic and environmental benefits to the community. Poplar Grove residents and businesses will have an opportunity to subscribe to the Solar Project. These subscribers will support clean energy in their community while benefiting from savings

on their electricity bills. In addition, the Solar Project will create new tax revenues for the community and generate economic activity through local construction, materials, and services.

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I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

The Applicant is a limited liability company, a wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC. Jonathan Carson is an Authorized Representative of the Applicant.

Applicant:

Poplar Grove Solar, LLC
c/o Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC
Attn: Jon Carson
P.O. Box 310
Highland Park, IL 60035
(312) 882-3713
legal@trajectoryenergy.com

Landowner:

DYN 173, LLC
c/o First Midwest Group
Attn: Marvin L. Keys
6801 Spring Creek Road
Rockford, IL, 61114
(815)-229-3000

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

a. General Description

The Solar Project will be located on approximately 17 acres in the Village of Poplar Grove, Section 14, Township 45 North, Range 3, Boone County, Illinois, Property Index Numbers: 03-14-300-002. See Exhibit A: Project Location.

Legal Description

PIN 03-14-300-002:

THE SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 14; ALSO ALL THAT PART OF THE NORTH HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 23, LYING NORTH OF THE RIGHT OF WAY OF THE CHICAGO NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, EXCEPTING FROM THE ABOVE ONE ACRE IN SAID NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 23, DEEDED TO WAYNE WHEELER, AS APPEARS OF RECORD IN BOOK 94 OF DEEDS, PAGE 533, BOONE COUNTY RECORDS, AND EXCEPTING 4.84 ACRES IN THE SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 14, DEED TO FLOYD NEWHOUSE, AS APPEARS OF RECORD IN BOOK 103 OF DEEDS, ON PAGE 444 ALSO EXCEPTING "TRACT A" CONTAINING .971 ACRES AND "TRACT B" CONTAINING 4.856 ACRES IN SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 14 DEED TO FLOYD NEWHOUSE AND WIFE, AS APPEARS OF RECORD IN BOOK 111 OF DEEDS PAGE 359 BOONE COUNTY RECORDS AND ALSO EXCEPTING THAT PART OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 23 DEED TO JOHN BULLARD AND

WIFE, AS APPEARS OF RECORD IN BOOK 106 OF DEEDS, ON PAGE 504 BOONE COUNTY RECORDS ALL OF THE ABOVE SITUATED IN TOWNSHIP 45 NORTH, RANGE 3 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN BOONE COUNTY, STATE OF ILLINOIS AND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS TO WIT:

PART OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION FOURTEEN (14), TOWNSHIP FORTY-FIVE (45) NORTH, RANGE THREE (3) EAST OF THE THIRD (3RD) PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT: BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION; THENCE NORTH 00°36'51" EAST, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 1326.34 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 89°49'33" EAST, ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, 2400.02 FEET TO THE WEST LINE OF TRACT "A" OF PREMISES CONVEYED ALLAN B. WARES TO FLOYD NEWHOUSE AND SHIRLEY NEWHOUSE BY QUIT CLAIM DEED DATED DECEMBER 26, 1952 AND RECORDED IN BOOK 111 OF DEEDS ON PAGE 359 IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS; THENCE SOUTH 00°38'50" WEST, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF TRACT "A" OF SAID PREMISES SO CONVEYED TO NEWHOUSE AS AFORESAID AND THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION THEREOF, 1324.88 FEET TO THE SOUTH LINE OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION; THENCE NORTH 89°51'38" WEST, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, 2399.26 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. SUBJECT TO THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC AND STATE OF ILLINOIS IN AND TO THOSE PORTIONS THEREOF TAKEN, USE OR DEDICATED FOR PUBLIC ROAD PURPOSES. SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF BOONE AND STATE OF ILLINOIS

The project is located on the portion of the Project Parcel that is currently zoned as Light Industrial District.

b. Site Plan and Phases

A Site Plan detailing the placement of the solar arrays and proposed access is included in this application. The proposed Solar Project is indicated on the Site Plan as Phase 1. The Applicant is concurrently submitting a Special Use Application for Phase 2. Each Phase contains a single 2MW AC community solar farm. Pursuant to the regulations and policies implementing FEJA, a single parcel may contain up to two 2MW AC community solar farms. The incentives required to construct each community solar farm are intended to be allocated by lottery, and thus each Phase may be awarded such incentives separately, and if both receive incentives, at different times. Thus, the Applicant may construct Phase 2 prior to Phase 1, or may only construct one of the two Phases if incentives are not available for both Phases. See Exhibit B: Site Plan.

c. Equipment Detail

The Solar Project will consist of equipment to generate electricity from solar energy, including rows of photovoltaic cell panels on a single-axis tracking system, racking, inverters, and perimeter fencing. Support poles will be driven into the ground. Transformers and other electrical equipment will be located on one to two small concrete pads measuring approximately 6' x 10' for each Phase. Panels will be installed in a north-south configuration on

a rotating mounting system that will track the sun throughout the day. The panels will be designed with an anti-reflective coating to minimize glare from the Solar Project and prevent impacts to avian wildlife including birds and bats. The Solar Project is intended to operate for a period of at least 25 years and will be constructed with solar panels and other electrical equipment with long-term warranties and very low expected rates of replacement.

The components of the Solar Project will comply with the current edition of the National Electric Code and be UL listed or meet a comparable safety standard. The Solar Project's electrical collection lines will be underground and then brought together for connection to the transmission network rather than directly to a substation. For each Phase, three on-site poles will convey powerlines to utility-owned poles and on to a proposed interconnection point within the Solar Project's footprint. See [Exhibit B: Site Plan](#).

d. Fencing, Access, Drainage and Landscaping

Each Phase of the Solar Project will be enclosed by a 7' chain-link fence, as required by the National Electrical Code. The Solar Project will be accessed from IL 173 along a dedicated access road and through a gated entrance with a maximum width of 24'.

Landscaping plans include plantings that buffer the residential parcels to the east within the proposed 100' setback along the eastern edge of the Solar Project. Vegetation under and around the Solar Project will be maintained by periodic mowing, inspections, and weed management as appropriate. The Solar Project will add cover vegetation to the site that traditionally been utilized for row crop. In doing so, drainage and runoff is expected to improve through the improved absorption of rain and melting snow and ice. No impervious surfaces will be added to Parcel, with the exception of one to two small concrete pads measuring roughly 6' x 10' for each Phase. The Solar Project will adhere to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) Construction Stormwater Permit Requirements.

In addition, the Solar Project will work with the Village and the Landowner to specify low-growing grasses or pollinator-friendly plantings to be planted as a buffer around the Solar Project. The pollinator-friendly species are intended to facilitate local pollinator habitat, improve water infiltration, prevent compaction, and control erosion while increasing microbial activity and production of organic matter.

e. Total Height of Solar Arrays and Other Structures

The total overall height of the facility will not exceed 12'.

f. Requested Duration

The Applicant will not be able to move forward with constructing either Phase of the Solar Project until it has received approval for Renewable Energy Credits. Both phases are currently on a waitlist for such Renewable Energy Credits (REC) and the Illinois Power Agency is expected to release additional information on additional REC awards in the future.

g. Proposed Setback Dimensions

See [Exhibit B: Site Plan](#)

TABLE 1: SETBACK TABLE

| | Village Requirement | Proposed Setbacks |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Light Industrial: Front | 30' | > 650' |
| Light Industrial: Western Side | 20' | > 700' |
| Light Industrial: Eastern Side | 20' | 100' with buffer plantings proposed. |
| Light Industrial: Rear | 30' | 30' |

See [Exhibit B: Site Plan](#).

h. Environmental Impact

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Ecological Compliance Assessment Tool (EcoCAT) consultation has been terminated with respect to the Solar Project site. See [Exhibit D: EcoCAT Consultation](#).

The Solar Project will comply with all local, state, and federal environmental regulations. A Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) has been requested from the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Solar Project shall be constructed, operated and maintained in compliance with federal, state, and local laws, including with respect to the removal and disposal of solid waste generated thereby. The Solar Project will also be maintained in a clean and neat manner, and any such solid waste will be removed as appropriate, with all costs borne by the Applicant.

i. Ingress and Egress During Construction and Thereafter

One Improved, gravel access road will provide ingress and egress from the Solar Project site to IL 173 both during construction and thereafter. The applicant will use a watering truck as necessary to control dust during construction. See [Exhibit B: Site Plan](#).

j. Construction and Maintenance; Traffic

The active construction period for each Phase of the Solar Project is expected to begin at the earliest in Spring 2021 and the construction of each Phase will last approximately 3 to 6

months. Construction will require trucks no larger than a typical 18-wheeler to deliver materials to the site, and onsite equipment will be used to drive pilings into the ground and install the panels, supports, and tracking equipment. Construction workers and personnel will arrive in pick-up trucks. Typically, solar installations do not require the use of cranes. Construction hours will follow a typical daily construction schedule.

The operations and maintenance of the Solar Project will generate minimal traffic. Because the Solar Project will be continuously monitored electronically off-site, engineers and maintenance technicians will visit the Solar Project a few times a year for routine maintenance and any repairs. Landscaping will be managed regularly during the growing season as described below.

k. Public Road Routes

The public road route will utilize IL 173, which is paved and designed for construction traffic.

l. Warning Signage

The Applicant will place signs warning of high voltage at the entrance to the solar facility as well as on the base of all pad mounted transformers. In addition, the Solar Project will prominently display a sign providing emergency contact information including the name of the solar facility, address, and the emergency contact telephone numbers for the Solar Project and the Operations and Maintenance contractor.

m. Conformance to Industry and Code Standards/Engineer Certification

The Solar Project will comply with all applicable local and county codes for the electrical, mechanical, and structural components of the facility.

n. Lighting

The Solar Project does not require lighting. No lighting will be installed.

o. Decommissioning

Upon the cessation of operations of the Solar Project, the Applicant will remove the installed Solar Project equipment and restore the site pursuant to its obligations to the Landowner, and will comply with the requirements of any governmental agency respecting the decommissioning and reclamation obligations for the Parcel. In connection with such decommissioning, the Applicant will remove the above-ground structures as well as the installed underground electrical equipment.

p. Property Value Impacts

Property valuation experts from CohnReznick have studied the value of properties that adjoin solar farms in Illinois and Indiana and concluded that the solar farms do not adversely affect the property values in either the short or long term.

The study included solar farms in LaSalle and Winnebago Counties in Illinois; as well as Elkhart, Lake, Madison, Marion and Porter Counties in Indiana. Experts analyzed property sale prices

and marketability of single family homes and agricultural land that adjoins solar farms and compared this data to comparable properties in the same county. The study also included interviews with county assessors and local real estate professionals, all of whom concluded that solar farms in their area had not impacted property values. Similar research has been conducted in other states across the U.S. and none of these studies have found that solar farms adversely affect nearby property values. Please see [Exhibit E: Impacts Study](#).

q. Owners of Record

The following landowners are adjacent to the Project Parcel:

| PIN# | Name/Trust No. | Street | City | Zip |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------|
| 03-15-400-011 | LINDBERG, DONALD A TR | 3952 IL ROUTE 173 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-15-400-010 | LINDBERG, DONALD A TR | 3952 IL ROUTE 173 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-14-300-001 | LINDBERG, DONALD A TR | 3952 IL ROUTE 173 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-14-300-008 | MCINTYRE, MICHAEL S & JANE A (HAAS) | 15302 IL ROUTE 76 | Poplar Grove | 61065 |
| 03-14-300-009 | RABE, DALE A & CANDY E | 15270 IL ROUTE 76 | Poplar Grove | 61065 |
| 03-14-300-005 | RABE, BENJAMIN | 15246 IL ROUTE 76 | Poplar Grove | 61065 |
| 03-14-300-006 | GUTHRIE, GLENN S & COLLEEN | 15214 IL ROUTE 76 | Poplar Grove | 61065 |
| 03-14-300-007 | DELIJAHN INCORPORATED | PO BOX 305 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-23-100-003 | NEBIU, ERGEN & NADRIT & MURAT | 4481 IL ROUTE 173 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-23-100-002 | GRACEFFA, PETER J | 4557 IL ROUTE 173 | Caledonia | 61011 |
| 03-23-100-013 | POPLAR GROVE STORAGE LLC | 6801 SPRING CREEK RD | Rockford | 61114 |
| 03-23-100-012 | DYN 173 LLC | 6801 SPRING CREEK RD | Rockford | 61114 |
| 03-22-200-002 | BOONE/POPLAR GROVE LLC | 6277 E RIVERSIDE BLVD | Rockford | 61114 |

r. Special Use for Corporations, Partnerships, and Joint Venture

- The Applicant is not a corporation, partnership or joint venture.
- The Applicant is not doing business under an assumed name.
- The Applicant is acting on its behalf.
- Poplar Grove Solar, LLC is a wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC, P.O. Box 310, Highland Park, IL 60035.

s. Special Use Fees

The Applicant has enclosed the filing fee with this application.

15. Overview

This report details information for several natural resource topics. Most of the details for individual topics are presented in a special section. This section highlights the natural resource concerns, which are most important to this site, the environment, and the community:

1. The land evaluation score for this site is 84.42 (Table 13) and most soils are listed as prime farmland or prime farmland when drained (Table 6). The BCSWCD Board has historically opposed zoning changes with land evaluation scores of 69 points or higher; however, characteristics of the proposed project may also influence the Board's final decision.
2. It appears some solar arrays are proposed within a main drainage way (Figures 15 & 16). These areas should be left unobstructed to avoid additional ponding (Tables 9, & 10). Likewise, within a main drainage way Sable silty clay loam (68A) is present. This soil has characteristics that describe it as 85 percent hydric (Figure 9; Table 8), poorly drained (Table 9), and frequently ponds (Table 10). Approximately eight percent of the AOI contains hydric soils (Figure 9; Table 8)
3. Based on mapped soil types, topography, watershed data, and an onsite investigation, a complex agricultural drainage tile system is likely present and should be located and protected prior to construction. During onsite inspection a main drainage way was noticeable near the northwest AOI boundary (Figure 2). Drainage tile maps have been provided from adjacent properties and illustrate several existing drainage tiles (some old clay tiles are also included) (Appendix D). References and maps show a natural drainage from northern border of the AOI trending south-southeast towards Illinois Route 173. Corn crop on this parcel currently masks evidence of any physical drainage way. Additionally, a tile breather south of Illinois Route 173 across from expected natural drainage way was observed during the site inspection, indicated water is likely being intercepted from the AOI and neighboring properties. If drainage tile systems are disrupted, additional ponding and flooding will likely occur.
4. Hydric soils are expected at this site, with approximately eight percent of the AOI expected to be hydric (Figure 9; Table 8).
5. Approximately 197 acres drain through this parcel and into Beaver Creek (Figure 10).
6. If this special use is approved and acreage of land disturbance is greater than one acre in size, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES Permit) will be required. Temporary soil stabilization, control of sediment during construction and permanent site stabilization after construction is completed is required under a NPDES permit.

4. Site Photographs



Figure 2. View toward AOI, looking northwest toward structures at 3952 Illinois Route 173, Caledonia, Illinois (top left); Area for proposed access road and chain link fence along western property boundary, looking north (top right); Drainage way (circled in orange), looking southeast (bottom).

2. Opinion of the BCSWCD Board

Jon Carson, on behalf of Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC., has submitted a request for a Natural Resources Information Report as part of an application for a Special Use for a solar energy facility in Section 14 of Poplar Grove Township. The Area of Interest (AOI) is less than a tenth of a mile west of the intersection of Illinois Route 76 and Illinois Route 173. The parcel identification number is 03-14-300-002; however, only about half of this parcel is proposed for the solar facility project.

The Boone County Soil & Water Conservation District Board has a

☒ Favorable

☐ Unfavorable

☐ Other: _____

opinion of the proposed land use change. The Board concerns are stressed in the "Overview" section of the report. More detailed information is presented throughout the various sections of this document.

Signature of Board Chairman:

Bill Hall on 8-17-2018



Figure 16. Preliminary Conceptual Plan with Aerial Photograph. Preliminary site plan (provided by Trajectory Solar Partners) illustrates some solar arrays are proposed within main drainage way (circled in orange). This drainage area should be left unobstructed to avoid additional ponding (Tables 9 & 10). Approximate location of tile breather, south of Illinois Route 173, is also circled in orange. The tile breather indicates water is likely being intercepted from the AOI and neighboring properties. If drainage tile systems are disrupted, additional ponding and flooding will likely occur. Drainage tiles should be located and protected prior to construction. Disruptions of tiles can also lead to additional ponding (Table 10).

Appendix D—Adjacent Property Tile Drainage Maps

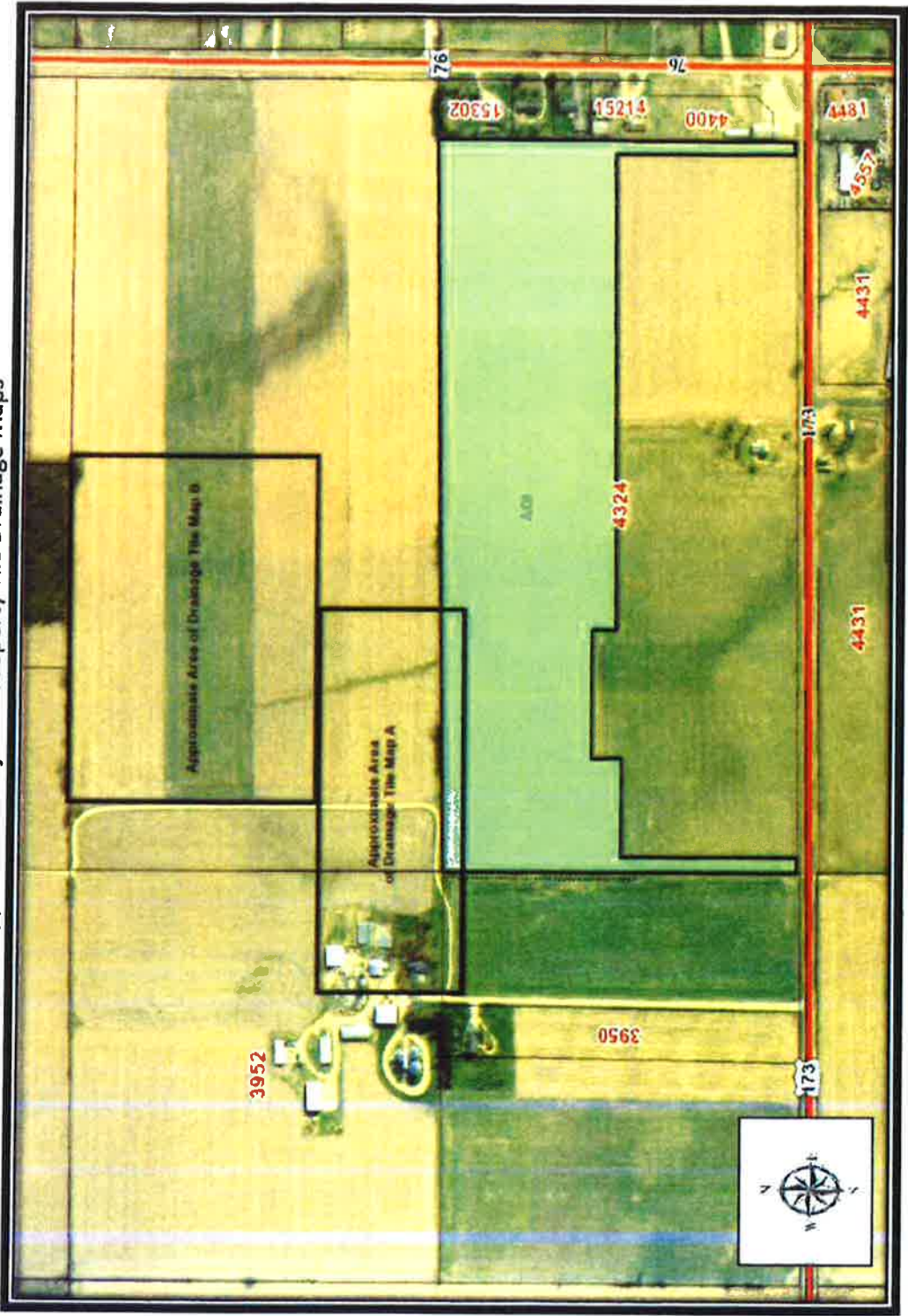


Figure 17. Area of Approximate Drainage Tile Map A & B Locations.

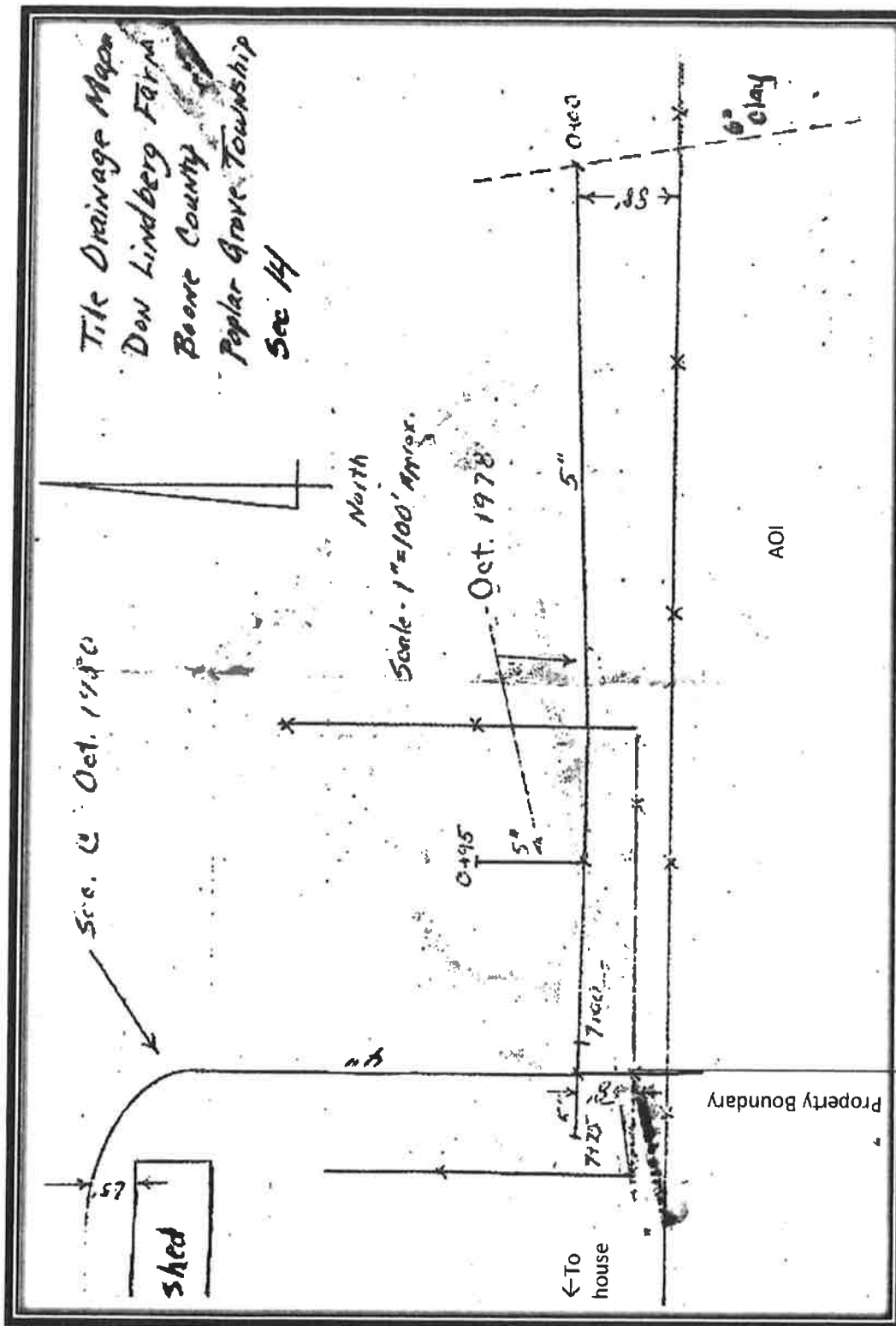


Figure 18. Tile Drainage Map A. Drainage tiles were mapped October of 1978 and 1980 by Lischka Drainage. Map illustrates there is a 6" clay tile present and enters into the AOI. There is approximately 2,980 linear feet of drainage tile mapped. Tile drainage map was provided by Don Lindberg August 15, 2018 and modified to define property boundary, location to house, and AOI.

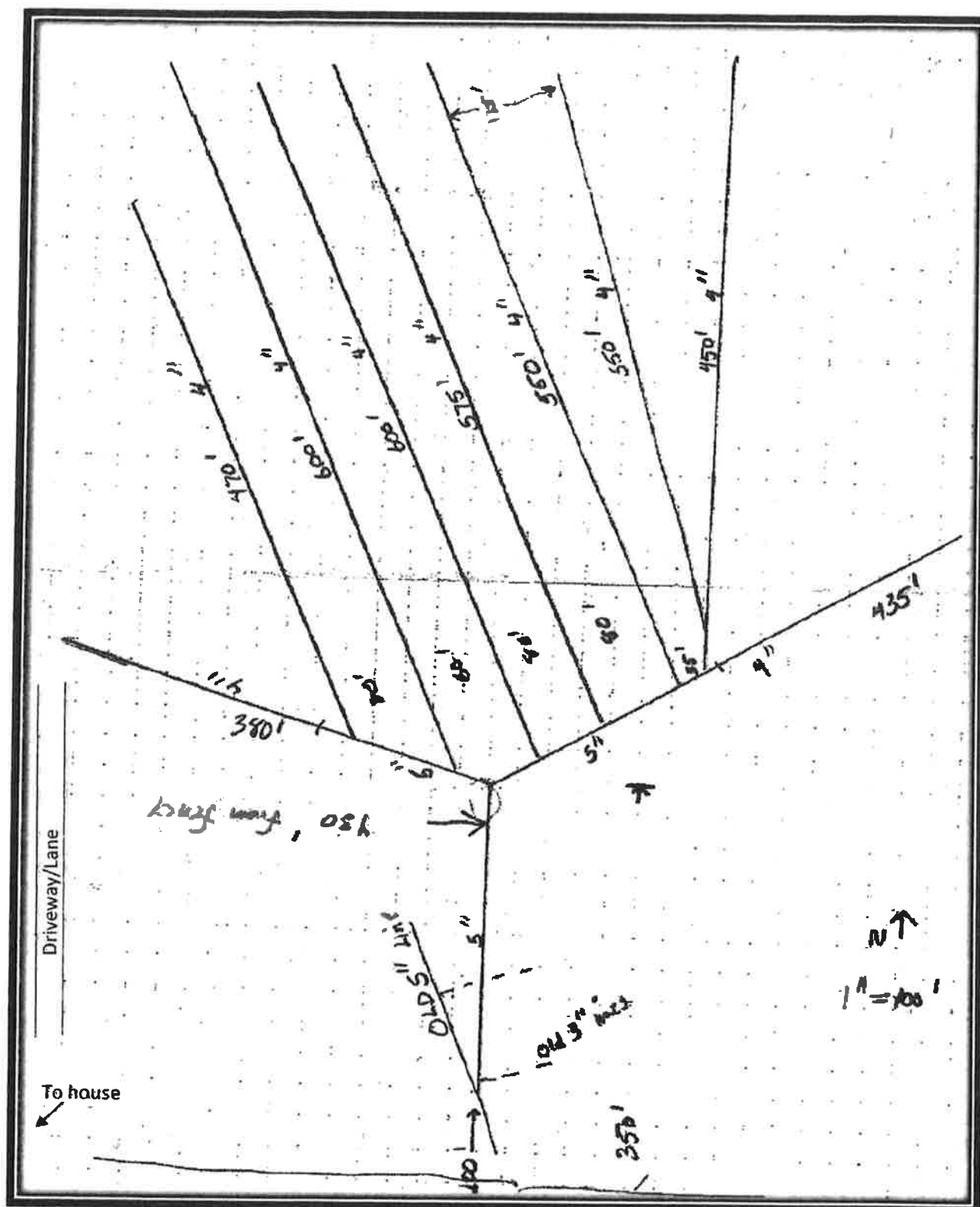


Figure 19. Tile Drainage Map B. Drainage tiles were mapped November 2000. There is approximately 5,040 linear feet of drainage tile mapped. This also indicates there are old 3" and 5" clay tiles. Tile drainage map was provided by Don Lindberg August 15, 2018 and was modified to include location to house and driveway/ lane boundary locations.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Boone County Health Department

1204 Logan Avenue, Belvidere, Illinois 61008
Main Office 815.544.2951 Clinic 815.544.9730 Fax 815.544.2050
www.boonehealth.org

*The mission of the Boone County Health Department is to serve our community by
preventing the spread of disease, promoting optimal wellness & protecting the public's health.*

September 04, 2020

FAX: 815-547-0789

Gina DelKose
Community Development Planner
401 Whitney Blvd Suite 300
Belvidere, IL 61008

Planning Services for Village of Poplar Grove

Re: Case: 2020-05, Poplar Grove Solar, LLC, 4324 IL Route 173 (East half)

Dear Gina,

We are in receipt of a copy for a Special use request. Specifically, to install non-building mounted solar collectors (total of 18 acres, eastern phase).

Our office has no objections or comments on this request.

Thank you,

Amanda Mehl
Administrator of Public Health
AT

Exhibit D: EcoCAT Consultation



Applicant: Trajectory Energy Partners, LLC
Contact: Joshua Bushinsky
Address: PO Box 310
Highland Park, IL 60035

Project: Trajectory-Boone County-Poplar Grove
Address: 4324 IL 173, Poplar Grove

IDNR Project Number: 1900789
Date: 07/24/2018
Alternate Number: COM_BOO_001

Description: Install solar energy infrastructure

Natural Resource Review Results

Consultation for Endangered Species Protection and Natural Areas Preservation (Part 1075)

The Illinois Natural Heritage Database contains no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites, dedicated Illinois Nature Preserves, or registered Land and Water Reserves in the vicinity of the project location.

Consultation is terminated. This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available that was not previously considered; the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary. Termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement.

Location

The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of the location submitted for the project.

County: Boone

Township, Range, Section:
45N, 3E, 14



IL Department of Natural Resources
Contact
Bradley Hayes
217-785-5500
Division of Ecosystems & Environment

Government Jurisdiction
Village of Poplar Grove
Gina DelRose
200 N. Hill Street
Village of Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Disclaimer

The Illinois Natural Heritage Database cannot provide a conclusive statement on the presence, absence, or condition of natural resources in Illinois. This review reflects the information existing in the Database at the time of this inquiry, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are encountered during the project's implementation, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations is required.