

Permission for Site Visit given by: NextEra Energy, Inc. and Planning Board

Date permission given: \_\_\_\_\_ (Owner, applicant, other) Permission received by: 8/22/21

**Shutesbury Conservation Commission  
Site Visit Summary**

**Observation Date:** 8/25/21 **Time:** 3:30-5:00 pm

**Project Address/Location:** 130 Pratt Corner Road

**Applicant(s):** NextEra Energy, Inc. (site operator)

**DEP/Permit File#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Project:** Special Permit Solar Project Annual Site Visit

**Attended:**

Commissioners: Miriam DeFant (chair), Robin Harrington, Beth Willson

Applicant(s)/Owner/Representative: Timothy Garcia, Jordan Harrison Joel Walker

Abutters/Others (require landowner's permission): Janice Stone (ConCom), PB: Deacon Bonnar, Michael DeChiara, Steve Bressler, Nathan Murphy, Jeff Lacy

**Purpose of Visit:** (check all apply)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permit Application              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Verify erosion controls    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To assess whether RDA or NOI is required | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Certificate                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As part of RDA meeting                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor Order of Conditions           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As part of NOI hearing                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Request to amend Order of Conditions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verify staked boundaries                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Certificate of Compliance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-construction site visit              | <input type="checkbox"/> Work done without permit              |

Other (describe): Courtesy site visit with Planning Board to review site conditions post-Special Permit issuance

**Type of Resource Areas/Buffer Zones: (list)**

Previous resource areas delineated through ConCom NOI and Planning Board Special Permit reviews and referenced on attached site plans: A-Series BVW along eastern border of project (WPA); B-Series Isolated Wetland along northeastern border of project and Reed Road (Town Bylaw); I-Series Wetland between eastern side of driveway and Pratt Corner Road, C-Series wetland along western side of project boundary. New wetlands conditions observed throughout property and within the stormwater management system. See attached photographs and observation comments for summary of site conditions. Stormwater system on western side of project was not observed.

**Recommendations:**

See attached comments on 2nd page. Conservation Commission should review data and determine what, if any, recommendations to make to the Planning Board and site operator.

**Prepared by:** Miriam DeFant Chair, Conservation Commission  
Name Title

Note: Consider relevant aspects or features such as natural or piped drainage or obvious pollution, topography, alternative locations, existing vegetation, signs of wildlife, vernal pools, rare species habitat, proximity to water bodies or drainage areas, landmarks, recent or historical disturbances, adjacent land use. Very information presented, identify problems and potential solutions.

Site visit Preamble: Pursuant to the MA Open Meeting Law, the Commission performs site visits only for the purposes of observing conditions, collecting information, and providing guidance to applicants. Decisions, approvals, and denials can be made only by the Commission at a properly advertised public meeting or hearing. Site visit discussions with Commissioners should be kept to a minimum and should in no way be construed to result in final decisions of any kind.

**Wheelock Tract Solar Project  
Conservation Commission Site Visit Report Addendum  
8/25/21**

**Observations and Comments  
(Note: These comments are advisory only)**

**Stormwater management along sloping driveway:**

- Driveway is severely eroded along length of driveway and at intersection with Pratt Corner Road.
- In addition to necessary repairs, consider adding larger culvert under driveway, additional drainage swales, and stormwater containment/roadside swale at intersection with Pratt Corner Road.

**Iron staining in stormwater swales:**

- Quantity of ferrous water is unusual for natural sources in this area. Iron-stained water is draining into a large detention basin that is functioning as a year-round wetland now.
- Source of discharge is unclear and merits investigation.
- Consider tracing staining to source and do a test boring or small pit to determine source.
- Determine whether remediation is necessary based upon investigation.

**Slope along eastern side of driveway near arrays:**

- Slope is insufficiently vegetated and shows signs of erosion. Runoff from slope may be contributing to excess water on the access road.
- Consider reseeding and adding other erosion controls.

**Construction phase silt fences have not been removed:**

- Plastic silt fences create barriers to wildlife.
- Consider removing the plastic silt fences.
- If erosion controls are considered necessary, consider using biodegradable erosion socks with straw (not hay).

**Vegetation and stabilization between arrays:**

- Some scattered areas between arrays show thick layers of wood chips and insufficient vegetation.
- Conditions are reportedly much better than observed in 2020 site visit.
- Consider reseeding with soil amendment in select areas where natural vegetation unlikely to take hold due to lack of topsoil.

**Condition of northern detention basin:**

- Basin was designed as an infiltration basin, but it is now functioning as a wetland with persisting water, wetlands vegetation, and evidence of wetlands organisms.
- Excess water may be due to soil conditions, high groundwater levels and/or surface runoff conditions.
- Continuous water in the basin reduces the amount of designated basin storage during storms.
- Some evidence noted of past discharge through outlet, though no evidence of sediment discharge into downgradient wetlands.

- Consider an additional stormwater features to divert and contain water coming down along the driveway. **ConCom RDA may be required if work near a wetland.**
- Dead tree in wetland is creating sieve conditions and should be removed.

**Invasive species:**

- No large areas of established invasive plant species were observed.
- Some areas showed beginning invasives presence (ex. Lysimachia/loosestrife).
- Recommend manual spot removal of invasive plants to prevent establishment.

**General Recommendations:**

- Consider retaining an independent environmental monitor to inspect site monthly and after storm events.
- Conduct repeat site visit after driveway repairs.
- Consider meeting with Highway Department and site operator to review erosion/discharge issues at Pratt Corner Road junction.

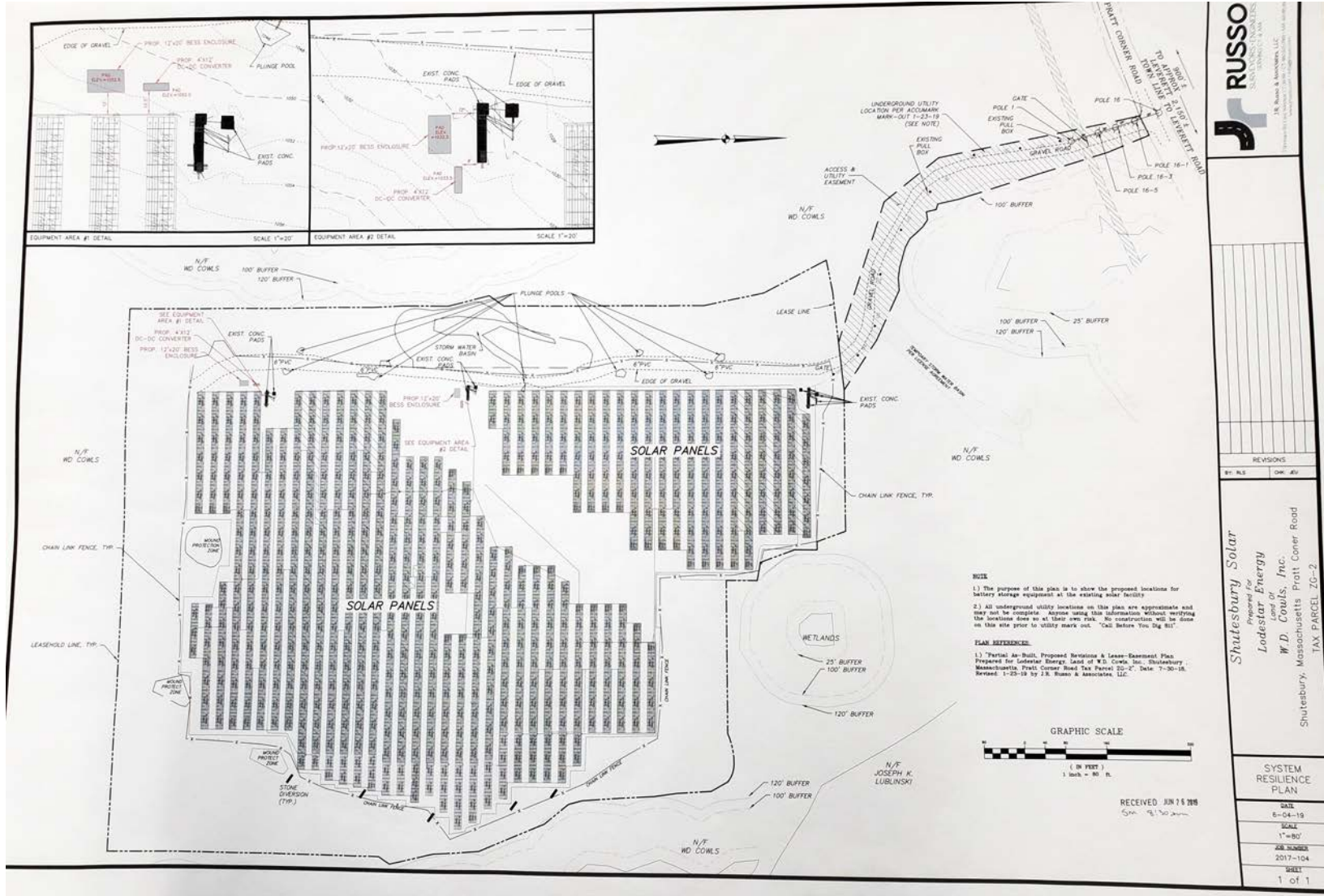
*Respectfully submitted by Miriam DeFant, Conservation Commissioner*

# Wheelock Tract Solar Project Site Visit

August 25, 2021



# 2019 Site Plan

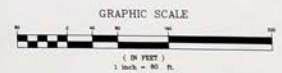


**NOTES**


- 1) The purpose of this plan is to show the proposed locations for battery storage equipment at the existing solar facility.
- 2) All underground utility locations on this plan are approximate and may not be complete. Assume using this information without verifying the locations done so at their own risk. No construction will be done on this site prior to utility mark-out. "Call Before You Dig Day".

**PLAN REFERENCES:**

- 1) "Final In-Built, Proposed Batteries & Green-Batteries Plan Prepared for Ladestar Energy, Ltd. of W.D. Coakley, Inc., Shutesbury, Massachusetts, Pratt Corner Road Tax Parcel 20-2", Date: 7-30-18. Revised: 1-23-18 by J.R. Russo & Associates, LLC.



RECEIVED JUN 15 2018  
 SM 9:30am



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REVISIONS

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION

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**Shutesbury Solar**  
 Prepared For  
**Ladestar Energy**  
 Land of  
**W.D. Coakley, Inc.**  
 Shutesbury, Massachusetts Pratt Corner Road  
 TAX PARCEL 20-2

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**SYSTEM RESILIENCE PLAN**

DATE	6-04-19
SCALE	1"=80'
JOB NUMBER	2017-104
SHEET	1 of 1

# Chronic erosion and sediment discharge onto Pratt Corner Road



# Access Road: evidence of significant erosion





Retaining wall between driveway and battery pad, showing partial vegetation on slope



Drainage swale along driveway with running water  
and evidence of unusually high iron content  
(source of iron unknown)



Slope abutting driveway with insufficient vegetation and evidence of chronic erosion.  
Erosion visible in 2020 Annual Report.



# Eastern view of panels



Wetlands plants established between arrays,  
indicating long-term presence of water



# Standing water in equipment ruts between arrays



# View of vegetation under arrays



# Eastern edge of project boundaries





# Erosion sediments along eastern side of project



Western view between arrays showing standing water in equipment ruts



Construction phase silt fences still in place along eastern/northern project boundaries



# Forest duff along eastern side of project with shade tree removal



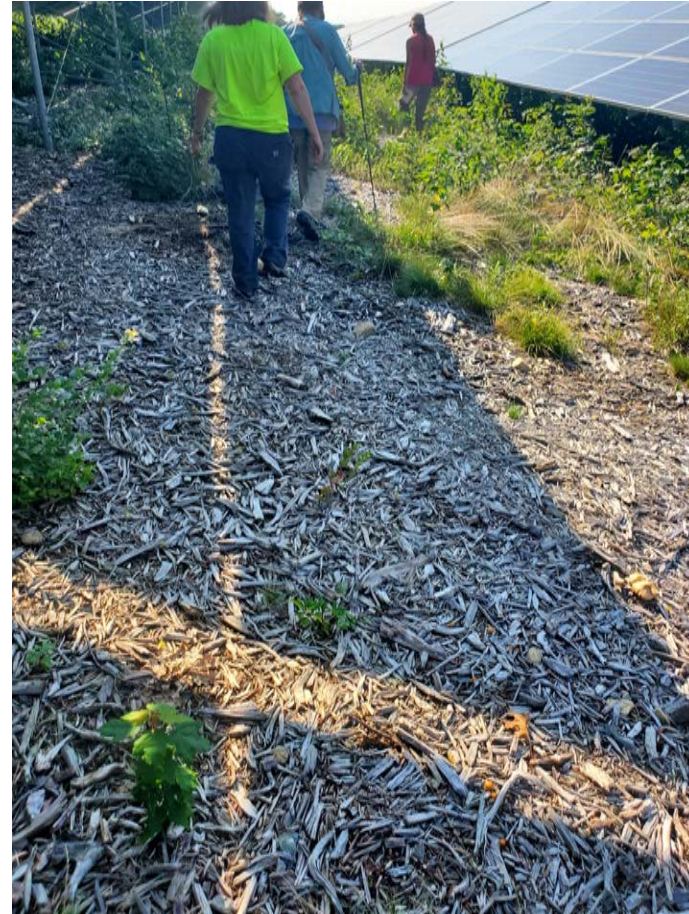
# Incompletely vegetated slope and erosion sock along eastern side of project area



# Eastern view of detention basin on northern side of project



# Areas with incomplete vegetation between arrays



# Equipment ruts with standing water around arrays





# Scattered areas of incomplete vegetation between arrays





# Tree down in detention basin



Eastern view of detention basin showing cattails, evidence of long-term surface water





Detention basin showing wetlands vegetation.  
Large quantities of frogs observed in basin.



Eastern end of detention basin, showing deeper water. Bottom not visible.



# Detention basin outlet showing signs of erosion and past scour





# Some invasive species observed: persicaria and lysimachia

