



# Town of China

571 Lakeview Drive; China, Maine 04358  
(207) 445-2014 info@chinamaine.org

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*Approved by Planning Board by a vote of 4-0 on June 28, 2022*

China Planning Board Site Visit May 24, 2022

Location: ME-32 Solar Array - 233 Windsor Road, China, ME

Board members in attendance: James Wilkens, Natale Tripodi, and Walter Bennett

Board members not in attendance: Toni Wall (leave of absence), Scott Rollins, and Michael Brown

Attendees: Joe Bumps, site superintendent and representative of Borrego Solar

Board Member Wilkens opened site visit at 5:35pm

## **Introduction:**

The reason for the site visit was in regard to the drafting of Chapter 8 – Solar Energy Systems ordinance. The visit will allow the Planning Board members to view how the solar arrays and the site are constructed and provide information on operations. All in attendance introduced themselves.

## **New Business**

Mr. Bumps guided the members around the project explaining how the arrays are constructed. He advised that the panels are bi-facial, meaning they can gather the sunlight either directly or indirectly. He continued that each panel is roughly 60 pounds and is non-porous. Board Member Wilkens questioned wattage with Mr. Bumps advising is in 440 range.

CEO Hanson pointed out location of wetlands in relation to panels. Mr. Bumps explained that the snow slides off the panels in the winter and that they have had very little any damage to the panels over the 4 seasons that the project has been completed. It was noted that the grass and other vegetation is continuing to grow under the panels and is only mowed twice a year. Mr. Bumps explained that the grade of the property was not changed.

Mr. Bumps continued to explain that the arrays are screwed into the ground with 6-foot ground screws and described the process of installation. He added that the arrays are constructed with I-beams. Mr. Bumps advised there are approximately 17 to 18 thousand panels on the property. CEO Hanson explained the additional permitted land will allow the project to be spread out more. It was noted that the Rte. 32 project is not very visible from the road.

Board Member Bennett expressed that the site is very well designed with wide open spacing between rows and ample clearance under the panels to allow for wildlife passage. He stressed that these types of projects need to be in tune with nature and less like a commercial strip. Board Member Bennett inquired into animal entrance into the area? Mr. Bumps advised wildlife does get in under the fence including deer, foxes, coyotes, etc. Signs of animal activity were noted at the site. There was discussion on wildlife access to site and how to restrict other types of access.



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CEO Hanson pointed out drainage locations and stated that he has not seen any issues with check dams. Mr. Bumps stated that he now inspects the area anytime there is over a ½ inch of water from a rain event. It was advised that all the wiring is underground inside the fence and only comes above the ground outside of the fence. It was noted that even with the system in full operation, there was no noise.

## **Adjourn**

Site visit was completed at 6:20pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dawn Kilgore  
Planning Board Secretary