

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Docket No. 526

Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC Application for a  
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and  
Public Need for the Construction, Maintenance, and  
Operation of a 4.999-Megawatt-AC Solar Photovoltaic  
Electric Generating Facility and Associated  
Equipment Located at Lantern Hill Road (Parcel No.  
169-1-4), Stonington, Connecticut and Associated  
Electrical Interconnection

Zoom Remote PUBLIC HEARING (Teleconference),  
on Thursday, December 12, 2024, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

H e l d B e f o r e :

JOHN MORISSETTE, Member and Presiding Officer

1   **A p p e a r a n c e s :**

2       **Councilmembers:**

3       **JOHN MORISSETTE, (Hearing Officer)**

4  
5       **BRIAN GOLEMBIEWSKI,**

6       **DEEP Designees**

7  
8       **QUAT NGUYEN,**

9       **PURA Designee**

10  
11       **CHANCE CARTER**

12       **ELIN KATZ**

13       **KHRISTINE HALL**

14       **DANIEL P. LYNCH, JR.**

15  
16   **Council Staff:**

17       **MELANIE BACHMAN, ESQ.,**

18       **Executive Director and Staff Attorney**

19  
20       **ROBERT MERCIER,**

21       **Siting Analyst**

22  
23       **LISA FONTAINE**

24       **Administrative Support**

25

1   **A p p e a r a n c e s:(cont'd)**

2   **For GREENSKIES CLEAN ENERGY, LLC:**

3           **PULLMAN & COMLEY, LLC**

4           **90 State House Square**

5           **Hartford, Connecticut 06103-3702**

6           **By:   LEE D. HOFFMAN, ESQ.**

7                   **LHoffman@pullcom.com**

8                   **860.424.4315**

9  
10   **Also Present:**

11           **DENNIS HICKS,**

12           **Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC**

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1 (Begin: 6:30 p.m.)

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3 THE HEARING OFFICER: Good evening, ladies and  
4 gentlemen. This hearing is called to order this  
5 Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. My name  
6 is John Morissette, member and Presiding Officer  
7 of the Connecticut Siting Council.

8 Other members of the Council are Brian  
9 Golembiewski, designee for Commissioner Katie  
10 Dykes of the Department of Energy and  
11 Environmental Protection; Quat Nguyen, designee  
12 for Chairman Marissa Paslick Gillett of the Public  
13 Utilities Regulatory Authority; Chance Carter;  
14 Christine Hall; Bill Syme; and Daniel P. Lynch,  
15 Jr.

16 Members of the staff are Executive Director  
17 Melanie Bachman, Siting Analyst Robert Mercier,  
18 and Administrative Support Lisa Fontaine.

19 If you haven't done so already, I ask that  
20 everyone please mute their computer audio and/or  
21 telephones now.

22 Thank you.

23 This is a continuation of the public hearing  
24 that began at 2 p.m. this afternoon. A copy of  
25 the prepared agenda is available on the Council's

1 Docket Number 526 webpage, along with a record of  
2 this matter, the public hearing notice,  
3 instructions for public access to the public  
4 hearing, and the Council's citizens guide to  
5 Siting Council's procedures.

6 This hearing is held pursuant to the  
7 provisions of Title 16 of the Connecticut General  
8 Statutes and of the Uniform Administrative  
9 Procedure Act upon an application from Greenskies  
10 Clean Energy, LLC, for a certificate of  
11 environmental compatibility and public need for  
12 the construction, maintenance, and operation of a  
13 4.999-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic  
14 electric-generating facility and associated  
15 equipment located at Lantern Hill Road, Parcel  
16 Number 169-1-4 in Stonington, Connecticut, and the  
17 associated electrical interconnection.

18 This application was received by the Council  
19 on September 27, 2024. The Council's legal notice  
20 of the date and time of this public hearing was  
21 published in The Day on October 26, 2024.

22 Upon this Council's request, the Applicant  
23 erected a sign in the vicinity of the proposed  
24 site so as to inform the public of the name of the  
25 applicant, the type of facility, the public

1 hearing date, and contact information for the  
2 Council, including its website and phone number.

3 As a reminder to all, off-the-record  
4 communication with a member of the Council or a  
5 member of the Council's staff upon the merits of  
6 this application is prohibited by law.

7 This public comment session is reserved for  
8 members of the public who have signed up in  
9 advance to make brief statements. These  
10 limited-appearance statements are not subject to  
11 questions from the Applicant or the Council, and  
12 members of the public making statements may not  
13 ask questions of the Applicant or the Council.

14 In accordance with the public hearing notice  
15 and in fairness to everyone who has signed up in  
16 advance to speak, these public statements will be  
17 limited to three minutes. Please be advised that  
18 written comments may be submitted by any person  
19 within 30 days of this public hearing.

20 I wish to note that the Applicant, including  
21 their representatives, witnesses, and members are  
22 not allowed to participate in the public comment  
23 session. I also wish to note for those who are  
24 listening and for the benefit of your friends and  
25 neighbors who are unable to join us for the public

1 comment session, that you or they may send written  
2 statements to the Council within 30 days of the  
3 date hereof by mail or by e-mail.

4 Please be advised that any person may be  
5 removed from the public comment session at the  
6 discretion of the Council.

7 We have asked each person making  
8 limited-appearance statements in this proceeding  
9 to confine his or her statements to the subject  
10 matter before the Council, and to avoid  
11 unreasonable repetition so that we may hear all  
12 the concerns you and your neighbors may have.  
13 Please be advised that the Council cannot answer  
14 questions from the public about the proposal.

15 A verbatim transcript will be made of this  
16 hearing and will be deposited in the Stonington  
17 Town Clerk's office for the convenience of the  
18 public.

19 At this time, I request the Applicant to make  
20 a brief presentation to the public describing the  
21 proposed facility. I believe Dennis Hicks is  
22 going to make the presentation. Mr. Hicks?

23 DENNIS HICKS: Hi. Dennis Hicks, Project Developer for  
24 Greenskies Clean Energy.

25 I just wanted to give a sort of a brief

1 summary of the project. The proposed project is a  
2 4.99-megawatt AC system located off of Lantern  
3 Hill Road. The project was submitted and awarded  
4 as part of the Shared Clean Energy Facility  
5 Program, or SCEF.

6 The project will sit on approximately 28  
7 acres of a 72-acre parcel along Whitford Brook,  
8 bordering the town of Ledyard, off of Lantern Hill  
9 Road. We are proposing a seven-foot-tall  
10 agricultural-style fence with no barbed wire.

11 Greenskies has taken care for the project to  
12 have as little impact to the land as possible due  
13 to the nature of the project location. Measures  
14 have been taken to ensure no pesticides or  
15 fertilizers would be used on the land.

16 Soil quality will be maintained through  
17 either a pollinator-friendly ground cover mix or  
18 an agricultural co-use alongside the solar system.  
19 These precautions should ensure the aquifer  
20 protection area is respected, and groundwater  
21 quality maintained. The project will also adhere  
22 to all state regulations for stormwater controls  
23 and wildlife protections.

24 A noise study confirmed that the project will  
25 be within the noise limits during operations



1 during the day, and at night no noise should be  
2 produced due to the system not operating. There's  
3 no expected tree clearing with the project, no  
4 activities within wetlands, and no major earthwork  
5 expected outside of what may be required to create  
6 stormwater controls and management practices.

7 The proposed interconnection equipment has  
8 been designed to have minimal visual impacts to  
9 the abutting properties. The project design goal  
10 includes two utility poles near Lantern Hill Road,  
11 and two poles set further in, further interior to  
12 the project with underground trenching, bringing  
13 electrical feeders from the project to the road.

14 The project is currently included in a  
15 cluster study with ISO New England and Eversource.

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Mr. Hicks.

17 DENNIS HICKS: Thank you for sharing that.

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: We now call on Malachy Weinges to  
19 make a public statement followed by Noreen  
20 Weinges. Hopefully, I pronounced your last names  
21 correctly. Malachy?

22 MALACHY WEINGES: Sorry about that. I was wondering,  
23 can I have my wife speak first and I can end with  
24 my comments?

25 THE HEARING OFFICER: Certainly. Go right ahead.

1 Noreen?

2 NOREEN FALK WEINGES: Yes. Yes, thank you. I'm Noreen  
3 Falk Weinges. And along with my husband Malachy,  
4 we own Lantern Hill Farm. I asked to speak today  
5 because I wanted to add a human element so you  
6 could put a face to the property.

7 I know Greenskies has done a wonderful job of  
8 presenting all the facts, but I just wanted you to  
9 see who -- the person who really has been involved  
10 with this since 1953.

11 I was two years old when I moved to Lantern  
12 Hill Farm, and that's where I grew up. It has a  
13 great New England history. I knew -- as a child,  
14 I knew the previous owners who had retired and  
15 then lived next door to my family. And they were  
16 two Italian immigrants, Aldo and Julia Gasparino,  
17 and they used the land to grow vegetables. They  
18 had a huge family, lots of kids, and I'm sure all  
19 the children were the labor that they used to keep  
20 that farm running. And as we have problems today  
21 with finding enough labor, in those days everybody  
22 had lots of kids. So, that took care of that  
23 issue.

24 And so they did that until they retired.  
25 Then my father, who was a recent graduate of the

1 University of Connecticut, he majored in animal  
2 husbandry and he wanted his own farm. So he,  
3 along with my mother, bought the land and  
4 developed a dairy farm. So, he had dairy cattle,  
5 he had Holsteins on the land, and he grew corn and  
6 he hayed. We had a hayloft. We had silage, and  
7 it was a working farm, and it was a wonderful  
8 place.

9 He started off right out of college, not much  
10 money and he had to sell his milk to someone else  
11 who bottled. He eventually was able to develop  
12 his own bottling plant, and that became known as  
13 Sunny Lee Dairy. So, he delivered milk to  
14 everybody in the area, Mystic, Stonington, Groton,  
15 homes, businesses. And that is -- I lived there  
16 until 1968.

17 When my father retired, he put the property  
18 in my name. He wanted to see it continue in the  
19 family with the hopes, I'm sure, that someone  
20 would want to continue farming. Unfortunately, my  
21 brother died in a car accident at a young age.  
22 So, he couldn't do that, and I simply am not a  
23 farmer.

24 So we have held onto the land with hopes that  
25 maybe we'd eventually live there, or someone, a

1 distant cousin would want to be a farmer, but that  
2 just isn't happening. And so, we've had to look  
3 at other things; what will become of this property  
4 and what is financially feasible? Because the  
5 property sits there and you do want to do  
6 something with it.

7 As for myself, I am a conservationist. I am  
8 a lifetime member of the Nature Conservancy. I  
9 currently live in Sedona, Arizona, and I was a  
10 member of the Historic Preservation Commission in  
11 Sedona. So, I've always had a fascination for  
12 preserving history. I love the history of New  
13 England.

14 And so, I look at the farm and I've said, how  
15 can we preserve it in some way and keep the land?  
16 And over the years, we've been approached by many  
17 developers who might have wanted to put homes,  
18 basically homes, sometimes parking lots, and we  
19 just never wanted to do that. We never wanted to  
20 tear the land apart.

21 And in doing research over the years, we came  
22 upon a solar farm and it just seemed to be the  
23 best fit for my concern with being able to  
24 preserve the farm, but doing something productive  
25 and something for the good of the public.

1           And so, we ended up meeting Ryan Linares from  
2 Greenskies, and we've been working with him since  
3 2016 to develop a good approach to developing the  
4 solar farm. And after years of paperwork on his  
5 part and studies done by his company, we're  
6 finally at the point that we can present this and  
7 move ahead, hopefully.

8           And I think this is a wonderful plan. It  
9 provides clean solar energy to the public. It  
10 will, once construction is done, it should have no  
11 impact on the traffic in the area. When the lease  
12 ends the farm will be restored, and there there's  
13 still a farm. If the economy changes and people  
14 are interested in being farmers, the land is still  
15 there.

16           So, I hope that you feel the way I do, that  
17 this is a very positive project.

18 **THE HEARING OFFICER:** Thank you, Noreen. Thank you so  
19 much for coming out this evening and sharing that  
20 with us.

21 **NOREEN FALK WEINGES:** Thank you.

22 **THE HEARING OFFICER:** We'll now go to Malachy.

23 **MALACHY WEINGES:** Thank you, sir.

24           I think Noreen said everything I was going to  
25 say. I didn't get a chance to really talk to her

1 about what we were going to talk about, but I had  
2 the pleasure from twelve o'clock my time, two  
3 o'clock your time, listening to the first session  
4 and I think that every question that we had on our  
5 minds over the last eight years, you raised the  
6 same questions in two hours.

7 And I really appreciate the Siting Council  
8 for, you know, being so detailed with your  
9 questions. We questioned about the turtles. We  
10 questioned about pesticides. We questioned about  
11 the floodplains and basically -- and also we  
12 brought up -- I think it was also brought up about  
13 fire safety and all, and I think you addressed  
14 everything in your first session.

15 So all I have to say is, really, I want to  
16 thank really the members of your Siting Council  
17 for your community service.

18 **THE HEARING OFFICER:** Thank you so much, and thank you  
19 again for coming out and speaking to us this  
20 evening. We very much appreciate it.

21 **MALACHY WEINGES:** Very welcome, sir.

22 **THE HEARING OFFICER:** Thank you. We'll now turn it  
23 over to Amy Austin Burke. Amy, are you with us  
24 this evening?  
25

1 (No response.)

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3 THE HEARING OFFICER: Unfortunately, I do not see Amy  
4 on the screen, so I don't think she made it this  
5 evening. Unfortunately, she hasn't joined us.

6 So with that, we will now close the hearing,  
7 but before closing this hearing, the Connecticut  
8 Siting Council announces that briefs and proposed  
9 findings of fact may be filed with the Council by  
10 the Applicant no later than January 11, 2025.

11 The submission of briefs and proposed  
12 findings of fact are not required by this Council.  
13 Rather, we leave to the choice of the Applicant.  
14 Anyone who has not become a party or intervener  
15 but wishes the desire to make his or her views  
16 known to the Council may file written statements  
17 with the Council within 30 days of the date  
18 hereof.

19 The Council will issue draft findings of  
20 fact, and thereafter parties and interveners may  
21 identify errors or inconsistencies between the  
22 Council's draft findings of fact and the record.  
23 However, no new information, no new evidence, and  
24 no arguments, and no reply briefs without our  
25 permission will be considered by the Council.

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Copies of the transcript of this hearing will be filed in the Stonington Town Clerk's office.

I hereby declare this hearing adjourned, and thank you, everyone, for your participation.

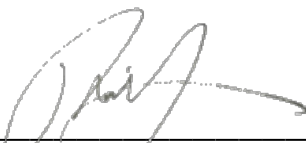
Have a good evening. Thank you.

(End: 6:46 p.m.)



CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 16 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the remote PUBLIC HEARING of THE CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING in Re: DOCKET NO. 526 GREENSKIES CLEAN ENERGY, LLC APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF A 4.999-MEGAWATT-AC SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT LOCATED AT LANTERN HILL ROAD (PARCEL NO. 169-1-4), STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL INTERCONNECTION, which was held before JOHN MORISSETTE, Member and Presiding Officer, on December 12, 2024.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857  
Notary Public  
My Commission Expires: 6/30/2025