

March 9, 2023

Mr. David George
Heritage Consultants, LLC
830 Berlin Turnpike
Berlin, CT 06037
(sent only via email to dgeorge@heritage-consultants.com)

Subject: Phase IB Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey
Proposed Solar Development
Spencer Hill Road
Winchester, Connecticut

Dear Mr. George:

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed the report titled, *Phase IB Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey of a Proposed Solar Center Project in Winchester, Connecticut* prepared by Heritage Consultants, LLC (Heritage). The proposed ground mounted solar array facility and associated improvements will cover approximately 20 acres on the eastern side of Spencer Hill Road just north of its intersection with Losaw Road. The proposed activities are under the jurisdiction of the Connecticut Siting Council. As a result, the project is subject to review by this office pursuant to the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act. In addition, the proposed project may require a Stormwater Discharge permit issued by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection through the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency. If so, the project also would be subject to review by this office pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The completed fieldwork and submitted report meet the standards set forth in the *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources*. SHPO has received two bound copies of the report; one will be kept for use in the office and the other will be transferred to the Dodd Research Center in Storrs for permanent archiving and accessibility.

A previously submitted archaeological assessment of the project was completed by Heritage in January of 2023. The results of the assessment survey revealed that approximately seven acres of the project area retained moderate/high archaeological sensitivity. The assessment identified no previously recorded archaeological sites and a single property (Gilbert Clock Factory) listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Heritage determined that the proposed project will not impact the Gilbert Clock Factory. A subsequent archaeological reconnaissance survey was completed by Heritage in February of 2023. During the survey, a total of 122 of 126 planned shovel tests measuring 50x50 cm were excavated at 15-meter intervals along transects placed 15 meters apart throughout the areas identified as having either a moderate or high probability for containing significant archaeological deposits. The planned but unexcavated shovel tests fell within areas containing standing water. The survey resulted in the recovery of 56 post-contact artifacts recovered from six shovel tests. All artifacts were recovered from plowzone or fill contexts and included domestic ceramic sherds, an olive bottle glass sherd, and

brick fragments. Heritage determined that the identified archaeological deposits were representative of typical low-density field scatter and were not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. No additional archaeological investigation was recommended. SHPO concurs with the findings of the report and that no additional testing of the project area is warranted. Therefore, it is the opinion of this office that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed solar facility.

This office appreciates the opportunity to review and comment upon this project. Do not hesitate to contact Cory Atkinson, Staff Archaeologist and Environmental Reviewer, for additional information at (860) 500-2458 or cory.atkinson@ct.gov.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Kinney
State Historic Preservation Officer