



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
*CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL*

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Phone: (860) 827-2935 Fax: (860) 827-2950

E-Mail: [siting.council@ct.gov](mailto:siting.council@ct.gov)

Web Site: [portal.ct.gov/csc](http://portal.ct.gov/csc)

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

September 30, 2024

Jeremy Leifert  
City Planner  
City of Torrington  
Municipal Building  
140 Main Street  
Torrington, CT 06790-5245  
[jeremy\\_leifert@torringtonct.org](mailto:jeremy_leifert@torringtonct.org)

RE: **PETITION NO. 1638** – LSE Sextans LLC and LSE Sextans II LLC (Lodestar Energy) petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 3.0-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility and associated equipment located at Parcel Nos. 221-3-1 and 222-4-26, Lovers Lane, Torrington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Dear Jeremy Leifert:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of the City of Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission's correspondence dated September 30, 2024 concerning the above-referenced petition. Thank you for taking the time to provide the Council with the comments.

This petition will be placed on a future Council meeting agenda for discussion and decision.

Before reaching a final decision on any petition, the Council must carefully consider all of the facts contained in the record that is developed by the Council, the petitioner, parties and intervenors to the petition, and consider all of the concerns received from members of the public who submit written statements to the Council.

Copies of your correspondence will be distributed to the service list for the petition and administratively noticed in the record.

Please note that you can view all of the documents related to this proceeding on our website at <https://portal.ct.gov/csc> under the "Decisions" link. You may also keep apprised of Council events on the website calendar and meeting agenda.

Thank you for your interest and concern in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Bachman  
Executive Director

MAB/MP/dll

c: Service List, dated August 16, 2024  
Council Members

# CITY OF TORRINGTON

LAND USE OFFICE  
140 Main Street • City Hall  
Torrington, CT 06790-5245



Phone: (860) 489-2221  
Fax: (860) 496-5928  
[www.torringtonct.org](http://www.torringtonct.org)

September 30, 2024

Connecticut Siting Council  
c/o Melanie Bachman, Executive Director  
10 Franklin Square  
New Britain, CT 06051

Re: Petition No. 1638, LSE Sextans, LLC/Lodestar Energy, Solar Energy Project, 181 and 191  
Lover's Lane, Torrington, CT

Dear Connecticut Siting Council,

At both the August 21<sup>st</sup> and September 11, 2024 meetings of the Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission, City staff and the Commission reviewed and discussed the proposed solar development project off of Lovers Lane, which consists of a 3 megawatt solar development spanning 17 acres of land. The Commission respectfully submits the comments below, in addition to those submitted by Mayor Elinor Carbone on September 26, 2024 (see attached). Although the Planning and Zoning Commission has conducted its' review based on conformity to the City Plan of Conservation and Development and design of the project, we echo the overall position of the Mayor's Office in the letter of September 26, 2024.

Several items were discussed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at the above referenced meetings, and the following were discussed at length:

*1. Planning and Zoning Commission jurisdiction*

The Commission and my office recognize that the Connecticut Siting Council retains exclusive jurisdiction on permitting of any solar projects of 1 megawatt or greater. They however also recognize the importance of commenting on any items of concern regarding the development plan or general design of the project. Given the fairly steep slopes, proximity to adjacent residents, we found it important to conduct a review and submit comments.

*2. Environmental concerns, engineering design for stormwater control, tree clearing, and habitat effects for sensitive plant and wildlife species*

In our review of the project, we noted that several state agencies have been notified in order to provide professional comments on the project design no later than October 3, 2024. In the

responses on file from state agency staff, it was determined that there are no material impacts to areas defined as “core forestland” as part of the project. Plans have been developed by the applicant and reviewed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and CT DEEP on species habitat protection for species listed on Connecticut’s Natural Diversity Database near the project area. A cultural/historical survey and report has also been produced for the project.

### *3. Effects on important agricultural soils*

It was determined through review by the CT Dept of Agriculture that there are no areas defined as “prime agricultural soils” that will be affected by this project.

### *4. Consistency with the City Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)*

The City of Torrington POCD generally supports these types of projects when planned, engineered and located properly. Since the Planning and Zoning Commission has no regulatory power for this project, comments are based on site design or alignment with the City’s POCD. The POCD recommends the use of alternative energy sources, particularly the use of solar “when appropriate” (Sec 13, Sustainability Objectives). Management and proper design of steep slopes are also a goal of the plan (Sec 4.5, Natural Resources) and agricultural soils for the historic hay lot are protected long term (Section 6, Community Character).

### *5. General Comments*

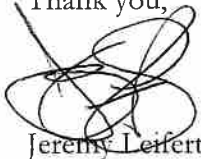
In light of the above and the depth of reviews and reports conducted on the project in the CT Siting Council review, the Commission echoes the Mayor’s position and concerns with the project detailed in her September 26, 2024 letter to the Council. However, the Planning Office, including both the Torrington Planning and Zoning and Conservation Commissions would recommend the following items for inclusion in any approval conditions, should the project be approved:

1. Screening to be provided along the entire shared project boundary or development boundary with the adjacent condominium complex to a *minimum* width of 25 feet consisting of a combination of solid fencing and vegetative screening. This would be a major requirement if there were local jurisdiction for both visual and sound buffering to adjacent properties.
2. Frequent and regular inspections of the construction site during and post construction, as this property is on steep slopes near wetlands, watercourses, adjacent residential developments, and a City roadway. Strict maintenance of Soil Erosion Controls such as erosion control fencing, and catch basin silt sacks should be a priority during construction as well as tracking control of mud, debris, etc. onto City Streets.
3. Similar projects in the City of Torrington have caused major damage to the local, City-Owned streets that have required significant repairs. Lover’s Lane is a narrow, steep roadway that will undoubtedly see significant truck traffic in construction of this project. The applicant is responsible for repairs to any roadway damage caused by construction vehicles.
4. There should be strict hours of operation during construction to minimize disturbance to the nearby condominium residences. We recommend no earlier than 8am nor later than 6pm.
5. It should be noted that the City retains an access easement along the southern boundary of the subject property that should remain unobstructed that provides access to City of Torrington Park Land to the east of the property.

6. The Siting Council should ensure that proper engineering review is conducted on pipe and culvert sizes in the proposed stormwater basins, wetland crossings, and roadway crossings to ensure that all are properly sized and located to handle the stormwater flows on the site, particularly the steep slopes.
7. Review should ensure that remaining forested wetlands on the property are protected during construction and post construction.
8. We recommend increasing the tracking pad length at the construction entrance from 50 feet to 100 feet due to slope challenges on the site.
9. We recommend consideration of grazing as a method for vegetation management in place of, or in combination with mowing. Mowing and/or grazing plan should be added to the Operations and Maintenance Plan for consistency.
10. A soil and erosion control plan should be added to the Decommissioning Plan for any future removals and site restoration.
11. We recommend that proposed tree clearing occur in the winter, outside of breeding or roosting season for sensitive tree roosting bat species.
12. Installed fencing should incorporate Best Management Practices for wildlife access, particularly identified species in the Natural Diversity Database review.
13. Irrespective of the City's POCD, we see no direct benefit to the City of Torrington or its' residents in developing alternative energy and utilizing land within our municipality where the energy production and use of the land does not directly benefit the City or its' residents. We ask that at least a portion of the energy produced by the installation be directed back for use within the boundaries of the City of Torrington for its' residents.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this application, and we look forward to working with the Siting Council for this project and future projects. Feel free to contact my office for any discussion. I am available at 860-489-2221 or by email at [Jeremy\\_leifert@torringtonct.org](mailto:Jeremy_leifert@torringtonct.org).

Thank you,



Jeremy Leifert  
City Planner  
City of Torrington

Cc: Elinor Carbone, Mayor, City of Torrington  
Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission