



East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council

Review of [Miller Road Solar](#) & [Miller Road Solar West](#)

Date approved by CAC: September 18, 2023

The East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) has reviewed the application for the proposed Miller Road Solar and Miller Road Solar West development projects. Among the natural resources that could be affected by the proposed development are the following:

- The North Branch Moordener Kill runs along the western border of the property. One of our low gradient, cool, headwaters and creeks, the stream is classified as trout water.
- The banks of the North Branch Moordener Kill on the property form a riparian zone that protects the cool water of the stream. The banks have steep slopes, which are sensitive to erosion.
- The site is adjacent to and visible from the Town Park, from which a patch of locally significant forest extends onto the property. Within this patch of forest is a mapped freshwater forested/shrub wetland.
- The site has large meadows with farmlands of statewide importance and prime farmland soils.

The developers have made thoughtful plans for the protection of these features. If the development is to bring more benefit than harm to the community, it is critical that these plans are followed and enforced in the construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of the project. In addition to the measures proposed by the developers, the CAC makes the following recommendations:

- Increase the vegetative buffer to creek, to protect the riparian area and steep slopes, and to protect the view shed from the Town Park.
 - Within array plantings:
 - Ensure species are native to New York, preferably the Hudson Valley ecoregion
 - Permit CAC to review planting list when it becomes available
 - One year following plantings, visit site to weed out undesirable non-target plant species that may take over if left unattended
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- Time spring mowing so that it is early enough to discourage invasive plants which leaf out earlier, and to spare nests of ground nesting birds.
- Clean construction equipment before entering and leaving the site to remove soil and plant material to prevent the spread of invasive species
- Minimize soil compaction during construction and maintenance to ensure future use of prime farmland and maintain pervious surface conditions

The CAC also notes foreseeable benefits to natural resources that would come from this project:

- The site will no longer be subject to herbicide and pesticide applications often needed for agricultural production, thus reducing the overall input of these chemicals into nearby waterways and groundwater.
- There will be a net increase of new pollinator and wildlife-friendly habitat from the within-array plantings (according to the Habitat Assessment, the fields are currently dominated by Kentucky bluegrass and winter wheat).
- The clean energy produced that will power 1,900 homes contributes a small, but important, step towards reduced reliance on burning fossil fuels and the consequent negative impacts of climate change.

Also attached is the CAC “Checklist For Site Resource Assessment” which provides additional details and links to relevant maps from the [East Greenbush Natural Resource Inventory](#).



East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council CHECKLIST FOR SITE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Project: [Miller Road Solar](#) & [Miller Road Solar West](#) **Date:** September 9, 2023

Location: 405 Miller Road, East Greenbush, NY

Brief Description: (From Full Environmental Review Form) The proposed project consists of developing a portion of a ±198 acre parcel in both the Town of Schodack NY and East Greenbush, NY with a grid-tied community solar array. The proposed solar development will occur within the Town of East Greenbush, while two access roads are proposed within the Town of Schodack....The parcel is further identified as Parcel IDs 167.00-4-36 [MR Solar] & 37 [MR Solar West]. The overall proposed project will cover +/- 51.1 acres (fenced in areas and access road). The solar fields have been divided into two separate projects - Miller Road Solar and Miller Road Solar West, each of which are proposed to be 4.975 MW-AC.... The solar fields are proposed to connect to the grid at an existing utility pole South of the site.

Water Resources: Streams, Floodplains, Wetlands and Aquifers

(NRI Section: 3, Maps 9-13, 17-18)

	Yes	No	N/A	Not Sure
Are there intermittent or perennial streams on or near the site? M-12, 15, 17 North Branch Moordener Kill runs along western border of both parcels.	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, are the streams classified as “trout” or “trout spawning” or “sensitive coldwater streams? North Branch Moordener Kill is here classified as “Trout Water” and “Low Gradient, Cool, Headwaters and Creeks.” 	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are culverts sized for large flood events and designed for wildlife passage (embedded / natural bottom)? One creek crossing for the access road falls within the Town of Schodack. 			X	
Is there a mapped flood zone or riparian zone on the site? M-11	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, have the proposed development features been located outside of those zones? The limit of the proposed fence is just outside the mapped flood and riparian zones, with the actual panels a bit further back. It is possible that big flood events could reach the panels, so Seaboard should consider whether the panel supports can withstand flooding. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there features from the town’s Watercourse Management Overlay at the site? If so, is the required 50’ buffer accounted 		X		



for? Fence and panels are more than 50 ft from water according to PP-01 map provided by Seaboard.				
Is there a mapped unconsolidated aquifer on the site? M-9 Southeastern half of 167.-4-36.	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, does the proposed development avoid or minimize impervious surfaces in the aquifer area? The PP-01 map shows minimal overall with the aquifer (about 0.3 acres). 			X	
Are there mapped wetlands or wetland soils on the site? M-13 Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland on 167.-4-36, but outside of the fence.	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have wetlands been delineated onsite, surveyed, and mapped onto a site-specific plan or subdivision plot? 			X	
If there are streams or wetlands on or near the site, have the proposed development features been located to preserve broad, undisturbed buffer zones along the streams and around the wetlands? (town code requires 25' buffer, NYNHP recommends 130' for good quality wetlands) The Forested wetland buffer is not in the proposed limit of disturbance. A wooded buffer of >130 ft currently exists between the wetland and farm field.	X			
Are stormwater management measures designed to preserve pre-construction patterns and volumes of surface water runoff from the site?				X
Is soil compaction from construction being addressed? Soil compaction from construction needs to be minimized to ensure proper water drainage.				X

Habitats and Wildlife

(NRI Section: 4, Maps 14-17)

	Yes	No	N/A	Not Sure
If there is a forest on the site, is it part of a large forest? M-16 A tongue of Locally Significant Forest (2,000-5,999 acres) extends from the Town Park through the middle of 167.-4-36	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is a large forest on (or partially on) the site, have proposed development features been located to minimize 	X			



fragmentation of the forest? The only tree clearing will be the thin strip of trees currently along the dividing line of the two parcels.				
Are valuable trees being considered for saving?			X	
If there is a meadow on the site, is it part of a large (≥ 10 ac) meadow? <u>M-14</u> Most of 167.-4-37 and about half of 167.-4-36 is covered by Hay/Pasture.	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is a large meadow on (or partially on) the site, have proposed development features been located to minimize fragmentation of the meadow? 		X		
Are there other unusual or sensitive habitats on the site? <u>M-15</u> If so, name them here: An important ecosystem complex associated with the Town Park Lake and North Branch of the Moordener Kill overlaps the northwestern boundary of 167.-4-36.	X			
Are there Areas of Known Importance on or adjoining the site? <u>M-15</u> See above.	X			
Is the site within or adjoining a Critical Environmental Area adopted by the municipality, or in a regulated Overlay District designated in the municipal code? If so, name the CEA or the Overlay District here:		X		
Have the proposed development features been located to preserve broad connectivity between onsite and offsite habitats? Fencing around panels is 6 inches off the ground to allow wildlife passage.	X			
Does the landscape plan include native plants suited for current and future climatic conditions? A species list has not been submitted yet. Site development plan states “New England conservation /wildlife seed mix to be used in areas of disturbance in order to promote bee pollinators.”				X
Are there plans in place to reduce introduction and spread of invasive species during construction? Unsure of decontamination practices planned for incoming equipment.				X



Agricultural Resources

(NRI Section: 6, Map 23)

	Yes	No	N/A	Not Sure
Are there Prime Farmland Soils or Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance on the site? M-23 Both parcels have Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance and 167.-4-36 also has Prime Farmland Soils.	X			
If there are good farmland soils on the site, have the proposed development features been located to minimize encroachment on those soils? The prime farmland soils will once again be usable after future decommissioning of the solar arrays.			X	

Conservation, Recreation, Historic, and Scenic Resources

(NRI Section: 6, Maps 24-25)

	Yes	No	N/A	Not Sure
Does the development plan include open space components?			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If this is a cluster or conservation subdivision, do the required open space elements provide acceptable benefits for resident enjoyment of nature and protection of natural resources? 				
Is the parcel in view of a certified Scenic Byway or Scenic Road, or within another area of scenic significance? M-24 The parcels abut the Town Park and the solar panels would be visible from certain Town Park trails.	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If this is in a scenic location, has the project been designed to minimize the visual impacts of the viewshed? 				
Would the proposed development significantly alter the visual character of the viewshed?		X		
Will the project impact significant historical sites? M-25		X		



Geological Considerations

(NRI Section: 2, Maps 4-7)

	Yes	No	N/A	Not Sure
<p>Are there steep slopes on the site? M-5</p> <p>There are areas of 10.1 - 14.9 percent slope on both parcels where they are bounded by the North Branch of the Moordener Kill. Parcel 167.-4-36 also has some slopes of 15 - 24.9 percent slope along the same border.</p>	X			
<p>What is the surficial geology at the site? M-7</p> <p>167.-4-36 is about 1/3 Outwash Sand & Gravel and 2/3 Glacial Till. 167.-4-37 is entirely Glacial Till.</p> <p>Will this need to be considered in the project construction?</p>				X

<p>List any valued resources likely to be significantly impacted by this project:</p> <p>The North Branch of the Moordener Kill is adjacent to the site.</p>
<p>Recommendations to limit negative impacts to valued resources:</p> <p>Plantings of native trees and shrubs along the riparian zone adjacent to the town park will help reduce impacts to the creek and reduce the view of the panels.</p>
<p>Will a site visit be conducted?</p> <p>Unknown</p>