

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE KENTUCKY STATE BOARD ON ELECTRIC GENERATION
AND TRANSMISSION SITING

In the Matter of:

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION OF MT OLIVE)	
CREEK SOLAR, LLC FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)	
CONSTRUCTION FOR AN APPROXIMATELY 60)	CASE NO.
MEGAWATT MERCHANT ELECTRIC SOLAR)	2020-00226
GENERATING FACILITY IN RUSSELL COUNTY,)	
KENTUCKY PURSUANT TO KRS 278.700 AND)	
807 KAR 5:110)	

ORDER

On July 10, 2020, Mt Olive Creek Solar, LLC (Mt Olive Creek) filed a notice of intent to file an application for a Certificate of Construction for an approximately 60-megawatt solar facility to be located in Russell Springs, Russell County, Kentucky. Also on July 10, 2020, Mt Olive Creek filed a motion to approve form of public meeting. The motion requests approval for a proposed format of a public meeting that would be conducted to conform to the current public gathering limitations and social distancing requirements imposed during the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Kentucky. Mt Olive Creek states that the proposed public meeting format would satisfy the public meeting requirement set forth in KRS 278.706(2)(f) and requests a declaration regarding the same.

In particular, Mt Olive Creek proposes the following process in conducting a public meeting as required by KRS 278.706(2)(f):

- (a) All representatives and experts making presentations for Mt Olive Creek at the public meeting will do so via a live “virtual” platform (such as Zoom);

- (b) The virtual platform used for the public meeting will allow members of the public to view the public meeting live, on-line, without cost, by registering with a valid email address, and will allow participants to ask representatives of Mt Olive Creek questions about the project, either orally or in writing;
- (c) The public meeting will be projected for viewing “live” at a physical location in Russell County to be designated in the notices of and advertisements for the public meeting, at which a representative of Mt Olive Creek will be present and a mechanism will be provided for any in-person attendees to address questions to representatives of Mt Olive Creek;
- (d) All notices of and advertisements for the public meeting will (i) specify how the public can access and participate in the public meeting via the online virtual platform or by calling a phone number for audio participation, (ii) encourage the public to participate in the public meeting virtually, NOT in-person, (iii) specify that in-person attendance at the public meeting will be consistent with guidelines and directives from the CDC and the Office of the Governor in effect at the time of the meeting regarding such meetings, including, but not limited to, social distancing and the requirement that masks be properly worn at all times, and (iv) specify that in order to allow for social distancing, the number of attendees at the in-person meeting will be limited and spaces allocated to the public on a first-come, first-served basis, and include instructions for how to sign-up for the available spaces.
- (e) In addition, Mt Olive Creek will make a large-scale (24 inches by 36 inches) layout map of the proposed solar facility, which otherwise would have been made available to the public for inspection at a public meeting, available to the public by displaying the map in the entrance to the Russell County Fiscal Court for the three business days prior to the public meeting, and will include this information in the notices to owners of property adjoining the proposed project.¹

¹ Mt Olive Creek Motion to Approve Form of Public Meeting at 2–3.

Mt Olive Creek asserts that the proposed public meeting format provides the public with multiple options to attend the meeting and receiving information about the proposed solar facility and therefore satisfies the requirements of KRS 278.706(2)(f), while accommodating the health and safety concerns raised by the current COVID-19 State of Emergency. Mt Olive Creek further asserts that it will publish notice of the public meeting and mail notice to all owners of property adjoining the proposed solar facility as required by KRS 278.706(2)(f)(2).

Having reviewed the motion and being otherwise sufficiently advised, the Siting Board finds that the protocols and process proposed by Mt Olive Creek to schedule and conduct its public meeting is consistent with the language and intent of KRS 278.706(2)(f). We note that KRS 278.706(2)(f) requires a completed application to include, among other things, a report identifying the various public outreach engagements performed by the applicant prior to the filing of an application. In particular, KRS 278.706(2)(f) provides, in relevant parts, as follows.

(2) A completed application shall include the following:

- (f) A complete report of the applicant's public involvement program activities undertaken prior to the filing of the application, including:
 1. The scheduling and conducting of a public meeting in the county or counties in which the proposed facility will be constructed at least ninety (90) days prior to the filing of an application, for the purpose of informing the public of the project being considered and receiving comment on it;
 2. Evidence that notice of the time, subject, and location of the public meeting was published in the newspaper of general circulation in the county, and that individual notice was mailed to all owners of property adjoining the proposed project at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting;

The process and protocols proposed by Mt Olive Creek for its public meeting strikes a balance in being able to provide information on the solar project development in Russell County and to receive comment from the public on the project as required by KRS 278.706(2)(f) and doing so in a manner that takes into account the current public gathering limitations and social distancing requirements imposed by the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Kentucky. Accordingly, Mt Olive Creek's motion should be approved as proposed. The Siting Board expects the details of the public meeting that will be reported in the application will mirror the format that has been proposed in the motion.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. Mt Olive Creek's motion to approve form of public meeting is granted.
2. Within three days of the publication of the public notice, Mt Olive Creek shall submit a copy of the newspaper advertisement that will notify the public of the proposed public meeting format.
3. Within three days of the mailing of the notice to adjacent property owners, Mt Olive Creek shall submit a copy of the notice of the public meeting format that is required to be provided to owners of property adjacent to the solar project.

By the Kentucky State Board on Electric
Generation and Transmission Siting



ATTEST:

Acting Executive Director
Public Service Commission
on behalf of the Kentucky State
Board on Electric Generation
and Transmission Siting

*James W Gardner
Sturgill, Turner, Barker & Moloney, PLLC
333 West Vine Street
Suite 1400
Lexington, KENTUCKY 40507

*M. Todd Osterloh
Sturgill, Turner, Barker & Moloney, PLLC
333 West Vine Street
Suite 1400
Lexington, KENTUCKY 40507