

**BEFORE
THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD**

In the Matter of the Application of Vinton Solar)
Energy LLC for a Certificate of Environmental)
Compatibility and Public Need to Construct a Solar-) Case No: 17-774-EL-BGN
Powered Electric Generation Facility in Vinton)
County, Ohio.)

TESTIMONY OF

Michael R. Kaplan

on behalf of

Vinton Solar Energy LLC

July 27, 2018

1. Please state your name.

Michael R. Kaplan.

2. Please state your business address.

One South Wacker Drive, Suite 1800, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

3. Please summarize your educational background and work experience.

I graduated from the University of Kansas with a Bachelor's Degree and subsequently received an MBA from DePaul's Kellstadt Graduate School of Business in Chicago.

Over the course of the last 8 years, I have been involved in the development and execution of well over 2 gigawatts worth of renewable energy projects across the United States.

4. By whom are you employed?

Invenergy LLC.

5. What is your position?

Vice President, Renewable Development.

6. What is your role in this Application before the Ohio Power Siting Board?

I am the Vice President of Renewable Development for Invenergy's East Region. The east region oversees all renewable project development within the state of Ohio, including the solar-powered generation facility proposed by Vinton Solar Energy LLC ("Applicant"), a subsidiary of Invenergy LLC. I have been involved in all aspects of the Hardin Wind Energy LLC project (Case No. 09-479-EL-BGN) and the Hardin Solar Energy LLC project (Case No. 17-773-EL-BGN) and have been involved in all aspects of the Vinton Solar Project since its initial inception. From land acquisition to environmental studies to financial modeling, I am familiar with all aspects of the Vinton Solar Project development.

32
33 **7. Please state the purpose of your testimony.**

34 The purpose of my testimony is to provide a summary of the Vinton Solar Project and a
35 description of the process that led to the joint stipulation and recommendation
36 (“Stipulation”), which was filed in the docket on July 27, 2018, and is being offered in
37 this proceeding as Joint Exhibit 1. I intend to explain the background of the Stipulation
38 and the reasons why I believe it should be adopted by the Ohio Power Siting Board
39 (“Board”). In addition, my testimony will confirm that the Stipulation complies with the
40 Board’s three-part test for evaluating stipulations.
41

42 **8. Please provide a summary and description of the Vinton Solar Project.**

43 As described in detail in Vinton Solar Energy LLC’s certificate application, which was
44 filed in this case on July 5, 2017, as supplemented August 16, 2017 and February 28,
45 2018 (“Application”), the Vinton Solar Project is located on approximately 1,950 acres of
46 leased land in Vinton County, Ohio in Elk Township (“Project Area”). The Applicant
47 has secured a total of 2,020 acres under two long-term leases with the same landowner.
48 Land use within the Vinton Solar Project is predominantly pasture and was previously
49 used for coal mining. The point of interconnection will be the 138-kilovolt Elk
50 substation adjacent to the Project Area. The Applicant determined that the Project Area
51 is an ideal location through a statewide review of transmission line locations and
52 availability, landowner interest, community interest, competitive analysis, and evaluation
53 of site suitability.
54

55 The Vinton Solar Project consists of a solar-powered electric generation facility of up to
56 125 megawatts. The facility will interconnect to the regional electrical system through a
57 substation adjacent to the Project Area. Depending on the exact modules used, we expect
58 the facility to include over 496,000 solar modules and to produce over 241,000 megawatt
59 hours per year. The Vinton Solar Project’s purpose is to produce clean, renewable,
60 reliably-priced, low-cost electricity to the Ohio bulk power transmission grid operated by
61 PJM Interconnection LLC or under a power purchase agreement.
62

9. Please provide the background concerning the discussions leading up to the Stipulation.

The Board's Staff ("Staff") issued a Staff Report of Investigation on July 5, 2018 ("Staff Report"). A local public hearing was subsequently held at Vinton County Community Building in McArthur, Ohio on July 24, 2018. The Stipulation, which was signed by the Applicant, Staff, and the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation ("OFBF"), was filed on July 27, 2018. The evidentiary hearing is scheduled to commence August 1, 2018, at the office of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

In my opinion, Staff completed its investigation process seamlessly. The Applicant did not detect any major issues or hurdles during Staff's investigation of the Application. Since the submission of the Application, we responded to several questions from Staff and filed our responses in the docket on October 2 and 23, and November 13, 2017, as well as June 21, 2018. We do not have major concerns with the Staff Report, and most of our proposed Stipulation revisions related to refinement of condition language. Note that the OFBF is the only intervenor in this case and has been involved in the development of and discussions regarding the Stipulation.

10. Did you encounter any objections to the Vinton Solar Project from the officials in the area?

No. The Applicant has been working in Vinton County and meeting with landowners regarding the Vinton Solar Project for over two years. Throughout this time, we have formed strong relationships with local landowners, as well as county officials. In fact, all Vinton County officials have expressed support for the Vinton Solar Project and are excited about the economic development this Project will bring to the region. In addition, we have become the presenting sponsor of the 2017 and 2018 Vinton County Junior Fair. The Fair is a week-long event for the families of Vinton County.

11. Why do you believe the Stipulation should be adopted by the Board?

In my opinion, the Stipulation is a reasonable, good faith settlement that resulted from serious negotiations among capable, knowledgeable parties to the case. Not only does

the Stipulation address all legitimate concerns that have been expressed by the parties, but, in addition, we believe the stipulated conditions ensure that the Vinton Solar Project will serve the public interest.

The Applicant estimates that construction and operation of the Vinton Solar Project will employ approximately 200 onsite workers during construction and 2 ongoing workers for the life of the Vinton Solar Project. We estimate that approximately 160 of these workers will be from Ohio during construction, and 1 ongoing worker will be from Vinton County.

Moreover, we expect the Vinton Solar Project to cause significant increases in county, township, city, and school district tax revenue. We expect the Vinton County Local School District alone to receive over \$367,000 annually as a result of the Vinton Solar Project. The Vinton County General Fund will receive more than \$76,000 annually, and other taxing districts can expect to receive between \$5,084 and \$50,836 annually. In total, we expect the Vinton Solar Project to result in over \$30 million of additional investment in Vinton County, and over \$60 million for the state of Ohio.

Note that, in general, solar power provides a clean, sustainable source of electricity, free of fuel pricing volatility. As energy and environmental costs rise, and technology advances, solar-powered generation provides a sustainable, long-term, competitive energy solution to both residents and businesses alike. In sum, we believe the public will be better served through the approval of the conditions set forth in the Stipulation today.

Finally, as a package, the Stipulation benefits ratepayers and the public interest, providing enormous economic benefits to the surrounding local community. In so doing, the Stipulation package does not violate any regulatory principle or practice. As such, we believe the Stipulation should be adopted by the Board.

12. Does this conclude your testimony?

Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The Ohio Power Siting Board's e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the parties referenced in the service list of the docket card who have electronically subscribed to this case. In addition, the undersigned certifies that a copy of the foregoing document is also being served upon the persons listed below via electronic mail this 27th ay of July, 2018.

/s/ Christine M.T. Pirik

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Summary: Testimony of Michael R. Kaplan electronically filed by Christine M.T. Pirik on behalf of Vinton Solar Energy LLC