

BEFORE
THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

In the Matter of the Application)
of Kingwood Solar I LLC, for a)
Certificate of Environmental) Case No. 21-0117-EL-BGN
Compatibility and Public Need)

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF TERRY FIFE ON BEHALF OF CITIZENS FOR
GREENE ACRES, INC., JENIFER ADAMS, P. CHANCE BALDWIN, JACOB
CHURCH, VERITY DIGEL, JED HANNA, KRAJICEK FAMILY TRUST,
JAMES JOSEPH KRAJICEK, KAREN LANDON, NICOLE MARVIN, CHAD
MOSSING, KAREN MOSSING, NICHOLAS PITSTICK, KYLE SHELTON,
MARLIN VANGSNESS, JEAN WEYANDT, AND JERALD WEYANDT**

Q.1. Please state your name and work address.

A.1. My name is Terry Fife and my local work address is 266 Xenia Ave., Yellow Springs,
Ohio.

Q.2. On whose behalf are you offering testimony in this case?

A.2. I am offering testimony on behalf of Intervenor Citizens of Greene Acres, Inc., Jenifer
Adams, P. Chance Baldwin, Jacob Church, Verity Digel, Jed Hanna, Krajicek Family
Trust, James Joseph Krajicek, Karen Landon, Nicole Marvin, Chad Mossing, Karen
Mossing, Nicholas Pitstick, Kyle Shelton, Marlin Vangsness, Jean Weyandt, and Jerald
Weyandt. My testimony will refer to the Citizens for Greene Acres, Inc. as "CGA."

Q.3. Are you or any member of your immediate family a member of CGA?

Q.3. Yes. My husband McKim Barnes and I are members.

Q.4. What is your educational background?

A.4. I have a B.A. in History from Beloit College and an M.A. in American History from
Northern Illinois University.

Q.5. What is your occupation?

A.5. I am a practicing historian who has been actively engaged in the field of applied public history for 40 years.

Q.6. Please provide an overview of your occupational experience.

A.6. I began my career as a researcher and then a curator at the Chicago Historical Society, which is now known as the Chicago History Museum. In the 1980s, I served as the co-curator of a major exhibition there, “We the People: Creating a New Nation, 1765-1820.” The exhibition, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was academically peer-reviewed and more than a million people visited it during the 12+ years it was on display. The exhibit received national recognition for its original scholarship and approach to chronicling the story of the country’s founding. It emphasized the history of the American Revolution, the creation of our Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, as well as the expansion of the new nation into the Northwest Territory, of which Ohio played an important role.

The exhibition led to a book published by Temple University Press on this same topic, which I co-authored with Alfred F. Young. Both the exhibition and the book, *We the People: Voices and Images of the new Nation* (1993) was reviewed in many scholarly journals and publications including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Q.7. What has been your professional path since this early chapter of your professional career?

A.7. In 1988, I founded a historical research firm called History Works, which is now recognized as the oldest public history consulting firm in the Midwest. Our clients include museums, scholars, individuals and families with noteworthy histories,

corporations, and some of the nation's largest law firms. History Works has also been retained by a number of not-for-profits to conduct original research, establish archives, and develop organizational histories. Several of the organizations we have assisted have been engaged in environmental stewardship and the preservation of open lands.

Q.8. What are your particular areas of expertise as a researcher and historian?

A.8. I was trained as a social historian and have 40 years of experience working with oral, visual and artifact-based evidence. I also work with more traditional primary sources that historians are trained to locate, evaluate, and interpret. I have a great deal of experience working with hard-to-find primary sources, materials, and evidence. My career reflects a long-time interest in documenting the history of ordinary people and working to make that history accessible to public audiences.

Q.9. What professional honors have you received?

A.9. The longevity of the firm I founded, now in its 34th year, is a professional honor. When Loyola University of Chicago established one of the country's first programs in Public History, I was asked to become an advisor to the program. A few years later, I was invited to become an adjunct member of that graduate program, which offers both an M.A. and a Ph.D. track. Teaching graduate students at Loyola for 20 years was certainly a professional honor, especially since there were (and still are) very few practicing or applied historians working both outside and inside the academy. During my tenure at Loyola I developed and taught graduate level classes in oral history, public history media, and historical museums. This was in addition to my full time as the principle and president of History Works.

Q.10. What is the purpose of your testimony?

1 A.10. The purpose of my testimony is to inform the Ohio Power Siting Board about the local
2 history of the proposed project area and to offer additional historical context and
3 information about Greene County and the three townships where the Kingwood project is
4 being proposed.

5 **Q.11. What information can you share that is above and beyond that which was provided**
6 **in the Developer's Application?**

7 A.11. One of the many studies the developer conducted as part of the Kingwood application
8 and various data requests from the OPSB staff is a document titled: the
9 *History/Architecture Reconnaissance Survey for the Proposed Kingwood Solar*
10 *Project.* "[must check actual title] I have reviewed the Survey prepared by Weller and
11 Associates on behalf of the Applicant as well as the guidelines offered by the State
12 Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for survey report submission requirements,
13 including their document *Guidelines for Conducting History/Architecture Surveys in*
14 *Ohio.*

15 The Applicant's submitted report provides some basic data typically included in
16 such surveys, but it fails to consider the "placement of resource in a local historic
17 context," one of the five basic criteria SHPO lists in its Guidelines for reconnaissance
18 surveys (page 7). Especially problematic is the fact that the lists of identified structures in
19 the project area provided by Weller and Associates are predicated on distances that are
20 not especially meaningful in a rural setting such as this one. Data about the types and
21 ages of structures in or near the project area is not at all detailed. Table 1 lists a total of
22 about 500 structures within 1,500 feet of the project area. Table 2 lists about 150
23 structures within 250 feet of the proposed project area. But in both tables, there is no

1 effort to consider the number of structures, the ages of those structures, and their
2 respective distances to one another. There are no references to groupings of historical
3 structures, such as those that exist in several specific locales within and proximate to the
4 project area. For example, a mid-nineteenth century house and barn, both at the same
5 location, have greater significance than a vintage barn without a house, or a vintage house
6 with a modern barn.

7 **Q.12. Why is Historical Context important?**

8 A.12. Historical CONTEXT is a key concept and tool in the trained historian's toolbox.

9 Identifying and understanding context is foundational to the study and the practice of
10 history. Developing context and contextualizing history is a complex, layered, and
11 nuanced process.

12 Without historical context it is impossible to fully understand an area, a region, or
13 people who have lived in those areas or communities at any time in the past. In the
14 absence of context, one is merely engaging in the listing of random facts, figures, dates,
15 and places. Compiling a list of structures that may, or may not be, eligible for
16 consideration for the National Register (of Historic Places) does not constitute a history
17 of the region where the Kingwood project is being proposed. A list of structures tells us
18 nothing about the backgrounds, the values, the culture, or the actual lives of the people
19 who built, lived, and used these structures. Context, in the case of understanding the
20 history of the proposed project area, involves an awareness of the people who have lived
21 and labored in this landscape over time.

22 Landscape, as the pioneering scholar J.B. Jackson proclaimed, is history made
23 visible. In the case of the landscapes that comprise much of the project area –in Xenia,

Miami, and Cedarville townships—that history is especially rich and layered, as is the topography.

Q.13. How does a trained historian actually “do history?”

A.13. The historian’s job is to pose questions and to try to answer those questions. In doing so, we identify, locate, and evaluate different kinds of source material, and we also consider the absence of sources. Historians consider what evidence was kept or preserved and why, as well as the kinds of sources that were not preserved or retained for posterity. Historians grapple with and evaluate contradictions in the sources they scrutinize and they consider the silences and biases that exist in the information, imagery, and artifacts they study. Rigorous interrogation of the historical record usually leads to new questions and new ways of looking at information previously considered as facts or interpretation. New information, as well as previously ignored information, and new ways of looking at old information, can confirm, refute, or augment our understanding of the past. Sometimes the process of doing history provides a new lens by which to view changes over time.

History is not a science, but rather a branch of the humanities that requires a deep appreciation of complicated and interrelated subjects. History demands a lot of its practitioners and good historians are interdisciplinary in their approach to studying the past. Historians must tackle subjects ranging from geography, anthropology, and sociology, to matters of religion, education, economics, and labor. In the case of a rural region, an understanding of natural history, agriculture, and day-to-day farm life is essential. Historians strive to arrive at a synthesis and create a narrative that helps

1 explain change over time. Contemplating how time has altered and shaped people,
2 places, ideas, and events is at the core of our discipline.

3 **Q.14. What evidence did you locate and consult in preparing for your testimony?**

4 A.14. I examined a broad range of primary and secondary sources. I studied a number of local
5 histories and maps, including the earliest ones compiled and created for Greene County,
6 as well as a range of local newspapers. Other sources I reviewed include a substantial
7 collection of family papers, memoirs, photographs, and records pertaining to the history
8 of the Clark Run neighborhood. I also inspected and studied some historic structures,
9 including barns and houses farther afield from the Clark Run neighborhood but near
10 Clifton and proximate to the eastern side of the project area. I reviewed and studied
11 primary source materials at the Greene County Historical Society, Xenia Township
12 offices, the Greene County Archives, the Greene County Room at the Greene County
13 Public Library, and the National Museum of Afro-American History in Wilberforce. All
14 of these sources shed light on the history of Greene County, its townships, and its people.

15 **Q.15. What local history has not been well documented, or is worthy of further study or**
16 **interpretation in order to gain a more accurate account of the area, the nation, and**
17 **our past?**

18 A.15. Long before the post-Revolutionary War arrival of settlers here in the 1790s and early
19 1800s, this region was home to several distinct groups of Native Peoples. The earliest of
20 these were known as Archaic People, and they lived in the Ohio River Valley about 7000
21 years ago. Other prehistoric peoples were the Adena, the Hopewell, and the Fort
22 Ancients. Some of these Moundbuilders were active in Greene County about 2000 years
23 ago. A surviving Adena mound, known locally as the Williamson Mound, is situated on

1 a former family farm a short distance, as the crow flies, from the proposed Kingwood
2 site. Now part of Greene County's park system, the mound and scenic trails surrounding
3 it attract visitors from all over the state.

4 The Miamis, Shawnees, Wyandots, and Delawares are Indian tribes whose names
5 are familiar to most area residents. Many of us may know that the Shawnee played an
6 especially important role in our local and early national history during the 1700s and into
7 the early 1800s. But the stories of these native peoples are complex and contested. For
8 those of us over 50 years of age, the narratives most of us learned in history class are long
9 outdated. Many historical accounts of the Shawnee and their leader Tecumseh, as well as
10 his brother, the Prophet, have been under-appreciated and distorted. Many narratives
11 compiled during the last 200 hundred years have grossly misrepresented Natives in ways
12 that reflected biases and stereotypes that have colored a great deal of this country's
13 history.

14 It is noteworthy to mention that Ohio's newest state park is now being planned in
15 Xenia Township, about 2 miles from the western-most edge of the Kingwood project.
16 The Tecumseh State Park will seek to present a fuller and more complete history of the
17 Shawnee people and their leaders. More than two centuries after the Shawnee were
18 driven from this region, some of their descendants and tribal historians will finally offer
19 their insights and evidence and help shape and expand our understanding of the role that
20 their ancestors played in the complicated chapter of Ohio's transition from territory to
21 statehood. Showcasing the role of native peoples in the larger story of the nation's
22 complicated and contentious early years could pave the way for Ohio's 76th state park to
23 become a heritage site of national significance. Some aspects of the county's local

1 history will surely be considered anew, as 21st century interpretations of our 18th century
2 past will feature more diverse voices, present new and provocative evidence, and employ
3 new ways of telling old stories.

4 **Q.16. Can you provide historical context and background about the rural neighborhoods**
5 **where Kingwood would be located? Is there context and information that is not**
6 **reflected in the historic structures report filed with the OPSB?**

7 A.16. Yes. In order to understand the distinctive ethno-religious history of the area's early
8 settlers, I have consulted materials about the religious, social, and cultural customs and
9 beliefs of those who first settled in Clifton, the Clark Run, and Massie's Creek
10 neighborhoods. They were primarily of Scottish and Scots-Irish heritage. Along with
11 others who were American born, they migrated to the area from Pennsylvania, Virginia,
12 and Kentucky. A number of the area's Scottish born residents journeyed across the Ohio
13 River with their Presbyterian minister, Reverend Robert Armstrong, when they learned
14 that Kentucky (which became a state in 1792) would become a slaveholding state.

15 Known in the early 1800s as Covenanters and Seceders, they were adherents to a
16 dissenting strain of Presbyterianism rooted in the theology of John Knox and the religious
17 politics of Scotland during the 17th and 18th centuries. Once in America, these minority
18 Presbyterians clung to particular tenets of the Scottish Reformation and established
19 churches and close-knit communities where they settled. The word "Reformed" or
20 "Associate" usually appears in the church names of these congregations. The
21 Covenanters were pious, principled, and disciplined people. They were steadfast in their
22 theology, especially in the context of struggles with the Crown before, during, after the
23 reformation. In America, they welcomed the separation of church and state, but their

1 strong Scottish and Scots-Irish ethnic heritage coupled with the remote rural areas where
2 they settled, reinforced their firm religious convictions. They were strict observers of the
3 Sabbath—eschewing work, fun, and frivolity of all kinds on Sundays. Meals were
4 prepared in advance, to be eaten between the two church services congregants attended
5 on the Sabbath. They strove to be honest and upright in their business dealings and in
6 their daily lives.

7 The majority of these early settlers were members of the area’s three rural
8 Presbyterian congregations, all of which were located proximate to the project area.
9 They were strong advocates of education-- for men as well as for women-- and fiercely
10 opposed to slavery.

11 In the first decades after statehood, a small contingent of Quakers moved into the
12 county, settling both north and south of Xenia. They too were opposed to slavery and
13 were politically and morally compatible with the Presbyterians already in the region.
14 Others, recent arrivals from Britain and Western Europe along with native born
15 Americans, migrated from the east and south, from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and
16 West Virginia.

17 The country began to attract free people of color too, some from eastern cities and
18 some who had been manumitted by their former slave owners. The sparsely populated
19 countryside was a place where those considered to be of “mixed race” could live more
20 easily. Few rural counties in the Midwest can claim the presence of an established
21 African American community in the years before 1865. The majority of the county’s
22 citizens of color lived in Xenia, in Miami, and Cedarville townships.

Q.17. How would you describe the many old homes and structures in the project area that are NOT on the National Register of Landmarked places?

A.17. Most of the dwellings the Covenanters built were solid but simple, sometimes made of local stones, like the 1809 structure at 1451 Bradfute Road. Other early houses in the area, while not meeting the highly subjective criteria associated with SOHP standards, are exquisite examples of the plain and practical Federal farm style indigenous to our local landscape. These structures, many of which were constructed with local clay and bricks fired on site, can be found throughout the project area. Examples of ordinary, now extraordinary, vernacular architecture of the early 1800s are located at 1360 and 1300 Bradfute Road, 1040 and 1430 Clifton Road, 1851 Stevenson Road, and 3010 Wilberforce-Clifton Road. At least twenty historic 19th century structures still stand in the little village of Clifton and many more are located just outside the village.

Most of the older houses (150 years +) in the area feature plain but elegant interior carpentry fashioned from local hardwoods, especially oak, maple and walnut. Many of the townships' early skilled craftsmen—carpenters, joiners, coopers, masons, wheelwrights, millers, and blacksmiths--aspired to acquire farm land in the area. When they were able to do so, they typically built their own houses. Many of the oldest homes in the area are valued for the skilled craftsmanship still on display.

Some of these local craftsmen had a hand in engineering and constructing the many water-powered mills that were once operational in the project area. Dozens of mills—grist, woolen, and lumber--were once located on the Little Miami, on Clark Run, and on Massie's Creek. The historic Clifton Mill and the Grinnell Mill have been preserved and stand as local touchstones to the area's early industrial and agricultural

1 heritage. There also serve as testaments to the labor of those who built and those who
2 have maintained these structures over 200 years.

3 **Q.18. Can you describe the vernacular or ordinary built environment of the neighborhood**
4 **today?**

5 A.18. A handful of abandoned 19th century residences, along with a few poorly kept properties,
6 are situated in and near the project area. There are many modest homes, substantial
7 farmhouses, a handful of manufactured homes, and some custom-built homes of a more
8 recent vintage. There are also current and former tenant farmer houses, of varying ages
9 and conditions, scattered throughout the project area. There are numerous aged barns,
10 many newer ones, and a number of outbuildings like sheds and siloes, of varying ages,
11 that one typically finds in a rural farming area. A few of these structures are dilapidated
12 but many more have been well maintained or more recently restored and preserved after a
13 period of neglect. Some of these house and barn renovations represent good examples of
14 historic and adaptive reuse (2330 Clark Run Road). As updated structures, they are
15 harmonious with the surrounding landscape and honor the vernacular architectural idioms
16 of the original structures and settings. They also feature most of the modern
17 conveniences Americans now desire in their homes.

18 Today, the decision to live in the country is a choice. Rural residents frequently
19 make dwelling-related decisions in very deliberate and sometimes expensive ways. We
20 drill and maintain our own wells and septic systems and we are responsible for heating
21 and cooling our homes in a variety of ways. Almost always, country life involves more
22 expense and effort than lives led by our city cousins. We lose our electrical power,
23 especially in times of severe weather, and we are typically last on the list for repairs

1 given our low population density relative to more urban and suburban areas. We have
2 unreliable and slow internet service. Yet we choose to live where we live for many
3 reasons. Chief among them is the value most of us place on the local landscape and how
4 it shapes and benefits us in different and profound ways.

5 **Q.19. Can you define and describe the area where you live?**

6 A.19. I live near the Kingwood project area where Clark Run Road connects Clifton Road with
7 Wilberforce-Clifton Road, and where Bradfute Road runs parallel with the creek known
8 as Clark's or Clark Run. I am a 7th generation family member who can trace her roots to
9 the congregation of Presbyterians who settled in Clifton about 1804. After working as
10 carpenters in Clifton, the second generation of my Scottish ancestors purchased land to
11 farm in the area bound by Tobias Road, Grinnell Road, and Clark Run Road, just off of
12 Wilberforce-Clifton. Members of my family have lived on Bradfute Road for more than
13 200 years.

14 My husband and I currently reside in a former one-room school house that my
15 great-grandfather acquired in the 1920s after Xenia Township closed the school. My
16 grandparents fixed the house up for young families to live in during and immediately
17 after WWII, and they lived in the school house themselves during the 1950s. My family
18 moved into the house the next decade. Growing up, everybody who lived on the road
19 was a relative and lived in a house built during the 19th century. Some of the family was
20 still engaged in farming then, although my parents were school teachers. I left the area to
21 attend college but was married at the school house in the late 1970s. We wanted to be
22 married there because it is a beautiful setting and a place with many special memories for
23 generations of family members. My husband and I lived and worked in Chicago for 40

1 years but as my family remained in the area, I returned often to visit with my own
2 children. I purchased the school house in the early 2000s, and moved back to the area in
3 2017, after my husband retired.

4 **Q.20. Are there any historically significant cemeteries in the project area?**

5 A.20. Yes. Each of the three townships—Xenia, Cedarville, and Miami—operate and maintain
6 a cemetery very close to the project area. All three of these country cemeteries were
7 established early in the 1800s and were initially connected to the first Presbyterian
8 congregations that shaped our communities and our culture. The original Massie’s Creek
9 Cemetery, so named for the log cabin Seceder church once situated there, is located on
10 Jones Road near the Stevenson Road covered bridge. As many as a dozen veterans of the
11 Revolutionary War are buried there. The second Massie’s Creek Cemetery, also known
12 as Tarbox Cemetery; is also home to many of the area’s earliest settlers, as well as many
13 from Cedarville township and many distinguished residents of nearby Wilberforce. The
14 Clifton-Union Cemetery now serves as Miami Township’s cemetery, but was first
15 established by the Presbyterian church there. All three of these local landmarks are
16 excellent examples of rural vernacular cemeteries and their evolution over time. Many
17 local residents visit these cemeteries, where there remains a strong tradition of decorating
18 the graves of family members. Many of us will be interred in cemeteries. All are
19 welcome—from those who have five or more generations buried in the same plot, to the
20 newest township residents. All three of these cemeteries are racially integrated and they
21 reflect and express our communities’ long-standing values and beliefs.

22 **Q.21. Was the local area linked to the Underground Railroad in the years before the Civil**
23 **War?**

1 A.21. Yes. But there were real risks involved in helping escaped slaves make their way to
2 freedom through Ohio and into Canada. Textual evidence about the Underground
3 Railroad is hard to come by, as documentation would have been kept to a minimum
4 and/or destroyed for fear of repercussions. And in the 1840s and 1850s, there were
5 plenty of people in Ohio, and in nearby Kentucky, who were pro-slavery.

6 One rare and extremely valuable resource I recently reviewed at the Greene
7 County Historical Society is a small booklet listing the names and dues paid to “the
8 Greene County Anti-Slavery Society.” Active as early as 1837, the members of this
9 clandestine organization include some familiar names: Bull; Corry; Harbison; Jones;
10 Townsley; Bradfute; Anderson; Knox; Laughead; Jackson; Mitchell; and multiple
11 members of the Collins family. Cross checking this list of about 50 people with church
12 membership rolls, most were members of the local Presbyterian churches previously
13 discussed. Almost half of the 50 members of Greene County’s Anti-Slavery Society
14 lived within 5 miles of the project area. Some of these members resided directly in the
15 project area and some lived on land now leased to the Applicant.

16 Other evidence about the Underground Railroad (URR) in Greene County exists,
17 a great deal of which was researched, unearthed, and compiled by local historians and
18 educators in the 1980s and 1990s. The group searched for oral traditions, artifacts, and
19 other documentation in church records, personal diaries, and ledgers. Their efforts
20 resulted in a teacher’s resource book written for the county’s elementary school students
21 and intended to serve as a field trip guide to the area. With assistance from the Ohio
22 Humanities Council, they published a brochure and map of sixteen probable URR sites,
23 almost half of which are within 5 miles of the project area.

1 The largest body of evidence about the Underground Railroad may be the area's
2 gently rolling landscape. Since many of Anti-Slavery Society members lived on elevated
3 spots on the western side of the project area, some of these locations are clearly visible
4 from distances as great as a mile or more. From several different vantage points, it is
5 actually possible to imagine how escaping slaves made their way from one location to
6 another in the cover of darkness. This is only possible because the landscape and
7 topography, and many of the old structures located at high points in the terrain, have
8 remained largely unchanged over nearly two centuries. This is true despite the inevitable
9 destruction of some key elements of the built environment and the addition of
10 infrastructure such as roads and bridges. A careful reading of the landscape, coupled
11 with knowledge about once extant barns, houses, and churches, thus becomes key to
12 understanding the concept of an invisible railroad in this locale. When linked with other
13 corroborating evidence, the landscape becomes a crucial factor in connecting other dots
14 from the past.

15 **Q.22. Can you provide some background and context about the area known as**
16 **Wilberforce?**

17 A.22. Wilberforce, an unincorporated corner of Xenia Township, is located just a couple of
18 miles from the proposed Kingwood site. This small community, originally known as
19 Tawawa Springs, has played an outsized role in the local area, region, state, and the
20 nation's past. Wilberforce University was founded in 1856 and is America's oldest
21 private African American institution of higher education. Students and scholars of
22 historically black colleges and universities have long been aware of Wilberforce and of
23 the many accomplished students, faculty, and residents drawn to the area over the past

1 175 years. But the community's historical significance has long been underappreciated.
2 It remains a challenge to quantify and present the important role Wilberforce has played
3 in the larger story of race in America. The Ohio Historical Marker program, relaunched
4 during Ohio's Bicentennial early this century, has designated 9 people or places
5 associated with Wilberforce as significant.

6 One marker recognizes the importance of Payne Theological Seminary, the first
7 such institution established by the African American Episcopal (AME) Church in the
8 1840s. Another marker celebrates the life and accomplishments of Charles Young, one of
9 the first men of color to graduate from West Point (1889). He came to Wilberforce in the
10 early 1890s to head the school's Military Sciences and Tactics program and had a
11 distinguished career as a combat soldier, officer, educator, and military attache abroad.
12 In 2013 the National Park Service created the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National
13 Monument (located in Young's former home in Wilberforce) to honor him and the legacy
14 of the many Buffalo Soldiers who answered the call to duty before the military was
15 finally desegregated after the Second World War.

16 Wilberforce is also home to Central State University, founded in 1947, but whose
17 origins are closely linked to the earlier history of Wilberforce University. CSU is one of
18 only nineteen "1890 Morrill Land Grant Universities" in the nation, established to ensure
19 that black students could access public institutions of higher education. Many of the
20 historical structures associated with both Wilberforce campuses were damaged or
21 destroyed in the 1974 Xenia Tornado, but the historic Carnegie Library (1907) and Kezia
22 Emery Hall (1913), an early women's dormitory, have recently been restored.

1 Today's CSU campus is expanding and is home to a new crop of students and
2 scholars, some of whom are studying and developing new methods and techniques that
3 will translate to applied agriculture today and tomorrow. The availability of productive
4 farm land near Wilberforce, as well as a long-established farming community nearby,
5 surely factored in to the decision to establish these new soil labs and ag programs at
6 Central State.

7 The National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center, opened in 1988, is
8 operated by the Ohio History Connection (formerly the Ohio State Historical Society)
9 and develops and supports a wide variety of educational and public programming.
10 Located on the Central State Campus, the museum attracts visitors from around the world
11 and has provided leadership and resources to other museums such as the National
12 Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati and the Smithsonian's National
13 Museum of African American History in Washington, D.C.

14 **Q.23. Can you offer some context about the agricultural history of the project area?**

15 A.23. The proposed Kingwood project is situated in the middle of an agricultural district with a
16 distinctive history of its own. The local terrain, climate, soil, and water quality have all
17 worked together to make this agricultural area a remarkably rich and well-regarded one.
18 It was an area well known in 19th and 20th century agricultural circles, in Ohio, the
19 Midwest and beyond. It was known just not just for its livestock and crop yields, but for
20 the disciplined and determined, inventive and even experimental approaches undertaken
21 by its local farmers over the years.

22 This particular part of Greene County was home to some of the state's and the
23 nation's first livestock breeding operations. One of the country's earliest and finest

1 Aberdeen Angus cattle farms was located in the project area. A number of local farmers
2 specialized were also prominent breeders of other varieties of cattle as well as sheep and
3 swine.

4 Local farmers who exhibited their livestock and other produce at the Greene
5 County Fair were, and still are, highly competitive both in Xenia and at the State Fair in
6 Columbus. Some of our area's farmers have been renown on the larger fair circuit,
7 earning top prizes at the nation's premier and international livestock expositions over the
8 years.

9 **Q.24. Is the area connected with America's agricultural history in other ways?**

10 A.24. One of our distinguished local residents was an early farm leader known throughout the
11 county, the state, and the country for his efforts to advance the interests of farmers and
12 agriculture. Oscar Bradfute (1865-1929) was a founder of the Ohio Farm Bureau and the
13 American Farm Bureau. He served as president of both organizations in the 1920s when
14 the country was undergoing rapid industrialization and the population was migrating
15 from farms to cities. While not appearing on the National Register of Historic Places, the
16 original farm house where he was born and lived, along with a bank barn and other
17 structures used during his lifetime, survive in both Cedarville Township and Xenia
18 Township. The extant buildings and the surrounding pastures and tillable land have been
19 well maintained by Bradfute descendants and more recently by non-family owners who
20 appreciate both the historical and visual significance of these properties. If the project is
21 constructed, solar panels would be visible from this historic family farm situated in one
22 of the most picturesque areas of the proposed project.

1 The 4-H Club, another nationally significant agricultural organization founded
2 during the Progressive era, has its roots next door, in nearby Clark County, where its
3 founder, A.B. Graham lived. Camp Clifton, located in Miami Township, near the village
4 of Clifton and adjacent to the Little Miami River, has served generations of farm kids and
5 4-H members for nearly a century. Camp Clifton is located on the banks of the Little
6 Miami River, proximate to the Kingwood site. Everyone approaching the camp via
7 automobile will do so with a view of the solar project.

8 The County Extension program has been active in Greene County for more than a
9 hundred years and has had a long and productive relationship with the Ohio State
10 University Ag School, now known as the College of Food, Agricultural, and
11 Environmental Sciences. Other long-lived conservation organizations include soil, water,
12 and forestry groups that work on behalf of or with state and federal agencies.

13 More recently, local grassroots groups have organized to advocate for the scenic
14 corridors and natural resources in the area. The Little Miami Watershed Network works
15 to protect and preserve the Little Miami River, the first to be designated a State Scenic
16 River and the first National Scenic River in Ohio. A significant stretch of the Little
17 Miami is adjacent or nearby the Kingwood project area. Clark Run, a meandering Class
18 II stream, runs directly through the project area and flows into Massies Creek, a major
19 tributary of the Little Miami River. Clark Run will be directly involved through
20 easements. These waterways have shaped the region's natural, agricultural, and
21 settlement history. Today's residents realize their history and future history will be tied
22 to natural resources, especially if we fail to care for them and the land that surrounds
23 them.

1 **Q.25. Have any of the schools and colleges in the area influenced the community?**

2 A.25. Early on, each of the three townships provided for the education of their rural children.

3 Several one-room school houses still stand in the project area and are now single family
4 residences. Prior to their consolidation, the township schools also served as gathering
5 spaces for the community. They hosted musical events, public speakers, patriotic events
6 and even pot luck picnics for the neighborhood. On Memorial Day and the Fourth of
7 July, aged soldiers and more recent military veterans gathered at township schools to be
8 honored for their service.

9 The area and its residents have long valued education and many females from the
10 townships became teachers locally and elsewhere. Most people who were raised in the
11 area, no matter their educational status, grew up surrounded by life-long learners. Other
12 traits woven into the fabric of the community include an appreciation for common sense
13 and an enthusiasm for finding inventive solutions to practical problems. Valuing
14 education, in many ways and forms, is part of the ethos of those with roots in these three
15 townships.

16 For well more than a century, a significant number of residents of this corner of
17 Greene County, including its farmers, have attended and/or earned college degrees, as
18 have many of their spouses and offspring. In addition to OSU, many area families sent
19 their sons and daughters to Cedarville College (founded 1887). Now known as
20 Cedarville University, it was a small Presbyterian institution prior to its Baptist affiliation
21 in 1953. Historic Antioch College is located in Miami Township and along with Ohio's
22 many other liberal arts colleges, these institutions of higher learning have always
23 attracted farm kids from Greene County.

Q.26. What historical demographics did you examine about the size and number of farms in the county?

A.26. Basic farm statistics are available for Greene County beginning in the 1840s. Over time, the federal government and state agencies have collected more precise data and information about the numbers and sizes of farms in the county and its townships. Historically, the county's farms have been diverse in their operations but small in size. In the mid-20th century, a very large farm consisted of 400 acres or more and only a handful of farms in the county were larger than 500 acres. A small farm, on the other hand, can be as small as 10 acres, the minimum size that qualifies for CAUV (Current Agricultural Use Valuation) status.

In 1997, the USDA counted 764 farms in Greene County. Twenty years later that number increased 7% to 817 farms. Despite increases in the number of farms, the average farm size decreased from 233 acres to 205 acres during the same time period.

The proposed Kingwood installation, initially dubbed a "solar farm," is more than five times the average sized farm in the county today. Southwestern Ohio is not central Iowa or Kansas, or even northern Ohio, where farms are typically much larger. The proposed project, when considered as one entity, is considerably outsized and out of proportion when compared to smaller, contiguous family farms that have been the norm for most of the county's history.

Q.27. What changes have occurred in the area over time?

A.27. There have been a number. Telephones, along with automobiles, came to the area in the early 1900s, though not everyone was able to enjoy those new amenities right away. Rural electrification was also a slow process, beginning in the 1920s for some lucky

1 households who experimented with Delco generators. Many other houses were not wired
2 for electricity until the 1940s. The early 1960s brought large electrical transmission lines
3 which altered the landscape of the area and ultimately played a role in the Applicant's
4 decision to site the Kingwood project. At the time these lines were constructed, many
5 local farmers and landowners were unhappy and felt the power companies with whom
6 they dealt were aggressive, especially as it was an eminent domain situation and local
7 residents had little say or input. Affected landowners were merely given checks and told
8 to steer clear of the transformers with their tractors and combines.

9 The introduction of township zoning and the construction of new homes,
10 especially since the 1970s, have certainly brought changes to the area. Some farm fields
11 have been divided and sold as lots for new houses. But the amount of local land that has
12 been "developed" for housing amounts to far fewer than 1000 acres over a period of 50
13 plus years. With the construction of new houses, traffic has increased. Households today
14 own multiple vehicles and many who live in the area commute to work elsewhere. The
15 construction of two highway bypasses, US 35 and I-675, have also contributed to
16 increased traffic. While noticeable to area residents over time, these changes have been
17 incremental, not sudden.

18 Changes in the economics, technology, and logistics of farming have also
19 occurred in recent decades, as have small farm owners' options and actions. Most of the
20 area's larger farmers rent land from smaller property owners who do not farm their own
21 land. Some of these active farmers have also acquired land they once rented. They have
22 also expanded their farming operations by purchasing former family farms nearby,
23 whenever those become available. Today's larger farmers acquire additional acreage, by

1 renting and purchasing, but this land is often distant and not contiguous to their own
2 homes and farming headquarters.

3 These developments represent a distinct trend but they have occurred
4 incrementally. Other changes that have been gradual but could become more pronounced
5 relate to what Americans eat and how they eat. Agriculture has always been Ohio's
6 biggest industry, and much of what is now produced in Ohio is exported beyond the
7 Buckeye state. But as health habits and our knowledge of nutrition changes, some of our
8 agricultural practices will undoubtedly change as well. During the Second World War,
9 local farmers grew hemp to supply the local rope factor with raw materials. When I was
10 a small child, my grandfather grew sorghum, both for soil conservation purposes and to
11 seize the opportunity to respond to a temporary sugar beet shortage elsewhere in the
12 nation.

13 Smaller and more specialized crops are surely in our future and given the size of
14 many of the area's small farms, our area is uniquely poised to pivot in new directions.
15 But that can happen only if productive land is available. Historically, standard rental
16 contracts in the region have been negotiated for a period of one year and seldom more
17 than five years. Forty year plus leases, such as those offered by the Applicant, are out of
18 the ordinary and they effectively represent a sale, given their duration. And there is no
19 retrospective data or historical evidence that can forecast how renewable energy
20 production will affect the nature of farming in the area going forward, and the farmers
21 and others who live here.

22 **Q.28. Have there been efforts to preserve farm land in the project area?**

1 A.28 Yes. Sustained and successful efforts to preserve farmland have taken root in Xenia,
2 Miami, and Cedarville townships over the past few decades. The Tecumseh Land Trust
3 (TLT), based in Miami Township, has been active in the area for over 30 years and they
4 have over 35,000 acres enrolled in their easement program. Several of these TLT
5 properties are in the project area and many local residents support the organization in
6 deed and in kind.

7 **Q.29. Has the state of Ohio acted to protect and preserve farmland in recent history?**

8 A.29. Governor Voinovich issued an Executive Order in 1998 (98-11V) entitled “Ohio
9 Farmland and Protection Policy.” The order directed a number of state agencies,
10 including the OPSB, “to examine policies, guidelines, and procedures to assure that land
11 acquisition, direct state development projects, state-assisted public and private
12 development including infrastructure, and development requiring state permits will not
13 eliminate or significantly interfere with or jeopardize the continuation of agriculture on
14 productive agricultural lands or reduce the agricultural potential on prime agricultural
15 soils unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative and the facility or service has been
16 planned to minimize its effect on such lands.” As an historian, I would describe this
17 primary source as a document that speaks for itself.

18 **Q.30. How familiar are you with the area’s natural, recreational, and historic sites?**

19 A.30. Quite familiar. The remarkable geology and ecosystems in and near Clifton Gorge, John
20 Bryan State Park, and the Glen Helen nature preserve comprise a river corridor of over
21 2,100 contiguous acres. The area has long served as a popular recreational destination as
22 well as a learning laboratory for ecology and environmental stewardship. I have hiked,

1 camped, and canoed in these special places. As a child, I enjoyed swimming in the
2 unheated, concrete public swimming pool at John Bryan.

3 Over the years, I have personally visited most of the natural, recreational, and
4 historic sites in the area—from the Galloway Cabin and the Greene County Historical
5 Society, to historic sites in Wilberforce. I am familiar with the Villages of Clifton and
6 Yellow Springs, Cedarville and Xenia. I enjoy hiking to nearby Williamson Mound, less
7 than two miles from the project area, and climbing the recently built stairs there that
8 allow visitors to summit the mound for a breathtaking view of the countryside.

9 I have visited all of the remaining covered bridges in the county, including several
10 that are no longer extant. Three covered bridges are currently located within three miles
11 of the project area. Local residents appreciate that others enjoy seeing these artifacts from
12 another era. During the summer months, we regularly observe car caravans, cyclists of
13 all kinds, joggers and hikers touring our neighborhood on scenic road trips and covered
14 bridge pilgrimages.

15 Like tens of thousands of other people, I count myself as a user of the bike paths
16 which are in close proximity to the project area. In good weather, I try to walk about 9
17 miles a week on the country roads in my own neighborhood. While walking I can see up
18 close the many seasonal rhythms of the landscape and the surrounding natural resources.
19 These walks also enable me to observe the built environment that has evolved over
20 time—from 19th century bank barns and corn cribs to houses more than 200 years old. A
21 number of nearby structures have been constructed or remodeled in recent years. They
22 too are a part of the local landscape, a landscape that has developed gradually and over

1 time. Together all of these buildings reflects changes in technology, agricultural labor,
2 land ownership, and other shifts in how rural people live and work.

3 **Q.31. Has nostalgia played a part in your historical analysis of the area?**

4 A.31. I do not think so. Historians are trained to be cautious of such sentiments as well as what
5 we call “present-mindedness,” the tendency to “judge” the past through the lens of the
6 present. The project area is not a Currier and Ives engraving, though it does include and
7 is very near some of the most scenic locales in the county and state

8 Like any neighborhood or extended family, people who have lived and labored
9 here have also had their share of sorrows, tragedies, poverty, and self-inflicted problems.
10 Neither today’s residents, nor those who preceded us, have been immune from
11 agricultural accidents, crime, struggles with addiction, mental health issues, debt, divorce,
12 or other life-altering problems. But such stresses and duress are often dealt with in ways
13 and means unfamiliar to those who do not live in the country. Rural neighbors can and
14 do make a life and death difference when the nearest ambulance is located 5 miles away
15 or the nearest house is beyond walking distance for a small child or elderly person. If
16 you are iced in, snowed in, or you lose power for a week, your neighbors are more than
17 just neighbors, they are a life-line.

18 **Q.32. How did the Xenia Tornado of 1974 affect the city and the surrounding rural areas**
19 **around it?**

20 A.32. For all who remember the area as it was before the Category 5 tornado struck, there
21 remains a deep sense of loss. The loss of life coupled with the loss of the landscape and
22 the built environment was a traumatic experience for many who lived through the
23 experience. People often preface their references to Xenia with the phrase, “before or

1 after 1974.” Overnight, life changed. The tornado altered where people lived, worked,
2 shopped, went to school, and where they attended church. For those of us who were
3 grown at the time, it also represented the loss of our physical past. After the cleanup and
4 hasty rebuilding began, people began to realize that many of their memories were linked
5 to places, and to people in those places. With so many of those places gone, it prompted
6 people to think about the past and the present in different ways.

7 Another consequence of the tornado, especially for those who lived through it, is
8 a heightened awareness of severe weather, especially in the spring time. Some locals
9 experience extreme anxiety when tornado conditions exist. Many of the concerns that
10 local residents have expressed about the proposed solar site relate to “what ifs.” But these
11 concerns come directly from their lived experiences. What if another big tornado
12 touches down in the project area? What kind of damage might we witness? Who will be
13 responsible for the clean-up and for any damages that might occur on non-participating
14 parcels as a result of flying debris and infrastructure? These are not trivial questions to
15 people who live in an area with a well-documented history of tornadic activity.
16 Furthermore, we now understand that there are both physical and psychological legacies
17 of extreme weather. And extreme, violent weather is integral to understanding both the
18 natural and the social history of the project area. (Greene County 2020 Hazard
19 Mitigation Plan, Michael Baker International, chapter 4)

20 **Q.33. To date, how has the proposal of the Kingwood project affected the sense of**
21 **community and neighborly relations in the area?**

22 A.33. The proposed Kingwood project gestated in secrecy for some time before it became
23 public knowledge in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the process and the proposed

1 project have engendered some deep and divisive rifts among neighbors and among some
2 families. How these social and familial fractures will play out and how later generations
3 will view them is unknown. Will literal and figurative fences be mended, regardless of
4 the Kingwood decision? Will the absence or presence of the project alter the estate plans
5 of those who own property here? Will it influence the actions of those who will inherit
6 property here? Will it change the normal customs, patterns, and prices of land
7 transactions, especially for those who live here? Will Kingwood alter the neighborhood's
8 demographics? How will it affect the scale and nature of local agriculture going
9 forward? Families and local residents, and perhaps future sociologists and historians,
10 may look back on this period and wrestle with the repercussions of these strained
11 relationships and schisms. They will not, however, derive much insight from the
12 Applicant's historic and cultural survey report included in the project documentation.

13 **Q.34. In your assessment, would the Kingwood project alter the character and history of**
14 **the local community?**

15 A.34. Yes. Kingwood would introduce an artificial and large physical element—a
16 manufacturing installation--to an otherwise rural landscape that has seen no such
17 alterations in its past. The sheer scale and nature of the project, along with its many
18 unknowns, would result in a sudden and dramatic transformation of the landscape. In my
19 estimation, the Kingwood facility would also have an adverse impact on the historical,
20 social, and cultural character of this local area and its community over time. It will most
21 certainly alter the aesthetics, or “lay of the land,” as well as the strong sense of place
22 residents have long attached to the area. The Kingwood facility will likely cause

1 irreparable harm to a rural community and its landscape, both of which are worth
2 preserving.

3 In summary, the Kingwood project is not compatible, consistent, or in keeping
4 with the history of the community where it would be situated. In all likelihood, the
5 presence of a large-scale solar energy facility will diminish and depreciate the value of
6 the area's rich cultural and historic resources.

7 **Q.35. Does that conclude your testimony?**

8 A.35. Yes.

9 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

10 I hereby certify that, on February 28, 2022, a copy of the foregoing written direct
11 testimony was served by electronic mail on the following: Jodi Bair at
12 Jodi.Bair@ohioattorneygeneral.gov; Daniel A. Brown at dbrown@brownlawdayton.com; Kevin
13 Dunn at kdd@planklaw.com; John Hart at jehartlaw@gmail.com; Werner Margard III at
14 Nathaniel B. Morse at nbmorse@vorys.com; Werner.Margard@ohioattorneygeneral.gov;
15 Michael Settineri at mjsettineri@vorys.com; Lee Slone at lee.slone@dinsmore.com; Charles
16 Swaney at cswaney@woh.rr.com; David Watkins at dw@planklaw.com; Anna Sanyal at
17 aasanyal@vorys.com; Nathaniel Morse at nmorse@vorys.com; Thaddeus Boggs at
18 tboggs@fbtlaw.com; Chad A. Endsley at cendsley@ofbf.org; Amy M. Milam at
19 amilam@ofbf.org; and Leah F. Curtis at lcurtis@ofbf.com.

21 /s/ Jack A. Van Kley
22 Jack A. Van Kley
23

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities
Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

2/28/2022 2:41:09 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-0117-EL-BGN

Summary: Testimony of Terry Fife electronically filed by Mr. Jack A. Van Kley on
behalf of Citizens for Greene Acres & Its Member Intervenors