

## December 9, 2020 Shepherd's Run Open House Questions and Answers

- 1. What percentage of the electricity generated at Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will be available to Columbia County homes and businesses?**
  - *While Hecate does not have control over how the electricity is distributed, it will generally flow to the closest points of local demand.*
- 2. Will the electricity generated at Shepherd's Run be transmitted via existing high voltage power lines?**
  - *Electricity generated by the Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will be collected by underground collection lines that feed into a collection substation near the existing substation. The power will then be connected to the existed substation, where it will feed into the local distribution grid where excess power will be evacuated to the nearest electricity demand centers in Columbia County and nearby counties. The Project will deliver power to the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) Zone F (Capital Zone) and can only sell power in New York State.*
- 3. Will new high voltage power lines be built? If so, where?**
  - *No.*
- 4. Will power storage facilities be built as part of this Project? If so, please provide the location(s), size, and description of any such proposed facilities.**
  - *The electricity storage regulatory framework is still under development in New York State. Until the electricity storage framework has been decided, Hecate will keep battery storage as an option for the Project. We've heard the concerns voiced by the local community and will take that into consideration for our ultimate decision on proposing a battery storage project.*
- 5. If a brush fire occurs in the panel fields, will local fire companies be trained and equipped by Hecate to provide an appropriate response?**
  - *Yes. Hecate energy will sponsor solar photovoltaic (PV) safety training for the local first responders.*
- 6. Does the rotation of the panels to follow the sun's path produce noise? If so, please explain the type and volume of such noise.**
  - *The Project will have tracking systems that allow the panels to be more efficient in the production of solar power. The information on the noise from the tracking system will be included in the Article 10 application. The noise is only something that can be heard if you are standing in very close proximity (a few feet) to the panels. At night, when it is the quietest, the panels will be stationary and the inverters de-energized so there will be no noise from the project.*
- 7. Why do you believe that siting this solar farm in an agricultural, residential, and tourism-centric area makes sense, as opposed to using industrial tracts in nearby areas, primarily in the western portions of Columbia County?**
  - *For New York State to reach its goals of emission-free power by 2040, New York needs 900 solar facilities of Shepherd's Run Solar Farm's size. There is no perfect solution, but in order for utility-scale solar projects to be sited and reach the state's clean energy goals,*

*developers like Hecate need landowner support, nearby interconnection facilities, and land that is suitable for solar, i.e., limited protected wetlands, and no habitat for threatened and endangered New York species.*

**8. Why is Hecate Energy choosing to ignore the Town of Copake's zoning code of 10 acres maximum use for large scale solar facilities?**

- Hecate is following the Article 10 permitting process under New York State Public Service Law. This permitting process takes into consideration local laws and the need to mitigate climate change.

**9. Why should Copake be forced to produce 67% of Columbia County's electrical demand? Why aren't many other towns being asked to produce their fair share?**

- *Copake has an opportunity to be the first county in New York State to reach the state's goals of 70% clean energy by 2030.*

**10. How many PERMANENT LONG-TERM jobs will be created if this Project is completed?**

- *2-3 for the solar facility, but there may be other full-time jobs created through Hecate's potential co-development projects like organic farming, beekeepers, and sheep farming roles.*

**11. Can you detail the plan for fire prevention, firefighting or other unexpected issues with the facility during construction and the production period?**

- *Hecate will develop these plans as part of our Article 10 application. Hecate has been in touch with the local fire department in Craryville and will provide them with communication plans to alert them of an issue, access to the facility, and training.*

**12. Why did you choose to locate the Project so close to the Taconic Hills School and near so many residential homes?**

- *It's important to site utility-scale solar near substations and where landowner support is offered. These two factors led us to the current site location.*

**13. How large are the high voltage power line towers? Are there any health issues or environmental issues with such large towers?**

- *The Project will use underground collection lines, which will be 3-10 ft below the ground level. There are no health or environmental issues with these types of lines- they exist all around us.*

**14. How many towers will be installed? How many miles of power lines will be used?**

- *No transmission towers will be built. A few new poles may be placed, but they would replace existing poles.*

**15. How are the galvanized steel tracker racking structures mounted to the earth?**

- *Steel I-beams are driven into the ground and the trackers are set on steel and aluminum racks on top of the I-beams.*

**16. What is the expected noise level generated from the rotation of the PV panels given there are over 200,000 panels? Can you provide the adjacent landowners with an audio of the rotation noise?**

- *A comprehensive noise study will be conducted, and the results will be presented in the Article 10 application. We don't anticipate affecting neighbors. The noise is only something that can be heard if you are standing in very close proximity (a few feet) to the panels. There will be no noise at night from the project when the panels are stationary.*

**17. Will Hecate be compensating impacted homeowners directly adjacent to the Project for loss of property values?**

- *Potential effects on property values are speculative and not included in Article 10's comprehensive study requirements. In addition, proximity to solar facility has not been demonstrated to decrease property values. Studies examining the property values of residential homes located near or with views of wind facilities have not found that home values are positively or negatively affected by wind facilities, which have more significant potential impacts than solar facilities<sup>1</sup>.*

**18. What is the "vegetative "landscape screening budget, excluding the security fence? And what does "vegetative landscape screening" actually mean?**

- *Hecate is in the process of developing a screening plan based on the site plan that was presented at the IOH on December 7, 2020. Once a final design is in place and once all of the visual assessment survey results have been collected, a final vegetation plan will be developed and released to the public.*

**19. Given the high elevation of Center Hill and the steep inclines on Rt 7, what additional screening is planned for these areas?**

- *Once a final design is in place and once all of the visual assessment survey results have been collected, a final vegetation plan will be developed.*

**20. Several areas on the project map indicate panels on areas currently forested. How many acres are planned to be cleared for placement of panels? Why remove timber at all?**

- *Hecate does its best to avoid tree clearing. Once a final design is in place, Hecate will calculate the land where trees may need to be removed.*

**21. Who is conducting the studies being commissioned to look into the impact on the wildlife? Has the Town of Copake been consulted?**

- *Hecate has a wide range of expert consultants who conduct the various studies needed to fulfill the Article 10 application and understand the natural environment of the project site. These studies are conducted to understand where critical habitat is located so that the Project can avoid those potential impacts to the maximum extent practicable.*

**22. How many miles of security fencing will be installed? How do you see this affecting the movement of wildlife and do you think this will impact the hunting of certain animals due to reduced population, especially deer, turkey, and waterfowl?**

- *The fencing boundary will be installed for operations and maintenance safety and once the Project's design is final, we can calculate the amount of fencing required. The Project studies have not identified any critical habitat for deer, turkey or waterfowl, which uses this land during migratory (if any) movements.*

**23. What is meant by your statement (Slide 7) "Large animals such as deer, bears, coyotes are not limited to localized areas with specific habitat requirements"? Are they excluded from your studies?**

- *They are included in the studies to determine if there is critical habitat for any fauna species. Deer, bears and coyotes are not threatened or endangered and have habitat*

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<sup>1</sup> Hoen, B., Wiser, R., & Cappers, P. (2013). *A Spatial Hedonic Analysis of the Effects of Wind Energy Facilities on Surrounding Property Values in the United States*. Berkeley: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. (<https://emp.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lbnl-6362e.pdf>)

*throughout the state, and the Project is not expected to limit their ability to move, breed and thrive.*

**24. Can you detail the decommission plan?**

- *The decommissioning plan will be included as part of the application package. It will provide financial security, upfront, to restore the Project site at the Project's end of life.*

**25. What is the cost and funding of the decommissioning Project?**

- *This is to be determined as part of the Article 10 Application.*

**26. Is the Town of Copake protected against bankruptcy or default?**

- *The permit conditions and project contracts remain with the project company. Because of the up-front decommissioning security, in an unlikely event of default, the project company [or the Town] will use those protected funds to remove the Project.*

**27. Are there any materials that cannot be recycled or that create toxic waste materials?**

- *Trace elements used in the soldering process for electrical systems are not recyclable but are protected from ever leaving the panels. These non-recyclable trace elements are the same elements that exist in our phones, televisions, computers and other electronics.*

**28. Will Hecate Energy remain involved, own, and manage the Project for the 20-year life of the Project and through the decommissioning phase?**

- *Hecate will develop the contracts under a project company established specifically for this Project. Those project contracts will remain in full force under the laws of New York State and will remain no matter who is the owner or operator of the Project. If the Project is awarded an Article 10 permit, the Article 10 permit and its conditions will remain with the project company in the same nature as the project contracts. It's unclear at the moment if Hecate will remain as an owner over the life of the Project.*

**29. Area- lots of numbers are being thrown around about the size of the Project. Please verify. Use all 500 acres? Use a portion of 500 acres? Case information states 900 acres? Does this include the solar storage system? - Where will this be located on the map?**

- *The Project is sited on 360 acres, where 280 acres represents the panel coverage, including the space in between the panels. Hecate studied 900 acres in order to understand which land is sensitive and should be sited with panels because of habitat to threatened and/or endangered animals, wetlands and other sensitive constraints.*

**30. Are any of the landowners planning on practicing agrivoltaics? It is being implemented all over the world. (merge farming with energy)?**

- *The Project is working with sheep farmers, beekeepers and native pollinator species landscaping groups to create a solar + agriculture model. Hecate has been in touch with organic farmers as well, where co-development opportunities may be created in the future. Farming is a difficult profession and solar will supplement much-needed income for the farmers.*

**31. Are the farmers considering this as an additional source of income? Or the primary source of income?**

- *Farmers are leasing their land for a variety of reasons. Some are leasing only portions of their total land holdings in order to keep their farms financially afloat.*

**32. Would plants that encourage pollination be established to preserve the topsoil?**

- *Yes, Hecate plans to use a pollinator friendly seeding plan to encourage soil recharge, ground water recharge, and habitat for bees, butterflies and birds.*

- 33. In order to integrate solar into the present electrical system, an energy storage system will be installed. I am assuming that would be lithium batteries. The main concern is fire safety. Methods to prevent thermal runaway? - single or multiple racks? Spacing of units? Fire suppression system? Firefighters? - Copake is a volunteer fire department that is constantly searching for volunteers. May not have the expertise to deal with thermal runaway.**
- *New York State is in the process of creating a regulatory framework for battery storage. Until that framework is in place, Hecate will consider the battery system as an option and its final decision will be made based on the regulatory framework and feedback from the public. If a battery storage system is included in the project, an emergency response plan will be developed and the local fire departments will be properly trained.*
- 34. I'm trying to understand how much money the Project will generate for this city and county, what it can be used for (tax cuts maybe), and what the details of the relevant tax policies are.**
- *The Project anticipates it will yield \$5-7 million dollars of new tax revenue over the life of the Project for the Town of Copake, Taconic Hills School District and Columbia County. The Town of Copake, Taconic Hills School District and Columbia County are able to use the funds at their discretion.*
- 35. How will your facility prevent avian collisions with the panels? Are you planning on conducting pre and post construction bird surveys?**
- *Bird collisions with solar fields, and solar in general in the US, typically happens in low numbers in the southwestern states. The main reason is that migratory birds crossing long patches of desert mistake panel areas as water bodies. This happens because they are tired and desperate for water. In New York, migratory birds have plenty of options for water.*
  - *The Project has already begun pre-construction bird surveys to understand habitat, breeding, and migratory patterns of birds at the project site. The results of those surveys will be available in our Article 10 permit application.*
  - *The National Audubon Society is a supporter of properly sited solar projects.*
- 36. Thank you for the call today. I have various questions and comments below. I look forward to hearing back. Also below is a link to the NYISO study<sup>2</sup> I referenced, specifically figures on pages 9, 28 and 29.**
- *The figures discussed in the above mentioned report and in the Open House meeting include nuclear power , while carbon-free, is not renewable.*
- 37. Clearly, the community is opposed to this Project, at this scale, why move forward if indeed Hecate does care about the community, as you said, both in print and verbally?**
- *Hecate is following the Article 10 permitting process under New York State Public Service Law. This permitting process takes into consideration local laws and the need to mitigate climate change.*
- 38. Why ignore our local zoning laws, which we as a community fully support and accept?**
- *Hecate is following the Article 10 permitting process under New York State Public Service Law. This permitting process takes into consideration local laws and the need of New York residents to mitigate climate change.*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/2223020/2020-Power-Trends-Report.pdf/dd91ce25-11fe-a14f-52c8-f1a9bd9085c2>

**39. You clearly heard that the majority on the call are opposed to this Project. Given the investment thus far, why should I believe that these meetings have any merit other than a means to move your firm's agenda forward?**

- *If permitted through the Article 10 permitting process, Article 10 certificate conditions will bind the Project and Hecate to execute its proposed course of action, described in detail during the Open House meetings. These certificate conditions will include host community benefits and the Project will help mitigate climate change impacts.*

**40. Columbia County energy generation has little relevance, and I do understand that energy, unmanaged flows to the point of least resistance, but transmission lines were/are built and used for a reason and moving power is clearly one of them. If indeed, as you said, the power were to remain in Columbia County, then what would happen to the hydropower that comes into this region? It would, of course, be moved elsewhere, which negates your argument. Where is this wrong?**

- *If you refer to the Stuyvesant Falls hydro facility (6 MW gross, 4 MW net), that facility and the Shepherd's Run project would represent approximately 75% of Columbia County's energy demands. Therefore, Columbia County still needs transmission lines to pull power from other parts of the state and to provide electricity when the Project is unavailable. The power will be sold into NYISO Zone F, (Capital)*

**41. On your point about supporting farmers, why am I burdened to help enrich the farmer? I don't benefit from his economics, why is this my problem? Please don't suggest this land will be sold and developed as it's highly unlikely that 300-400 acres would be developed for housing and if so, it will be in compliance with local zoning, which your Project clearly doesn't.**

- *Landowners are allowed to use their land as they wish under certain regulatory conditions. The Project will allow the farmers to continue to farm other parts of their land and keep the property in the family.*

**42. Will 360 acres be the maximum size, or will there be a phase two or the potential for phase two? You used the term "initial" design.**

- *There are no additional phases planned. Our initial design will go through iterations to account for micro-siting, discovered encumbrances, permitting conditions, to name a few.*

**43. Once the panels reach their useful life, why won't this Project be repowered if the landowner is willing? If so, then please stop suggesting a 20-year life. This is likely to be a permanent fixture unless Hecate and its predecessors contractually guarantee to not repower. Will Hecate agree to this?**

- *After 20 years, the panels will still produce clean and renewable power at 80-85% efficiency, depending on the panel manufacturer. As part of the Article 10 permitting process, the Project needs to provide up-front security to decommission and remove the facility after its useful life.*
- *Repowering a wind or solar facility is a great idea to utilize existing infrastructure. That process will need to be determined a few years before the decommissioning process begins.*

**44. What is the maximum elevation of the panels?**

- *The panels will be approximately 10 ft tall, similar to a field cornstalk.*

- 45. What is the height of the fence surrounding the Project? What is the type of fencing to be used? Will it be purely for security or cosmetic purposes? The photo simulation you showed has no fencing visible. Will there be guarantees on the minimum size/maturity of the plantings around the facility, or will we be forced to look at this albatross for 5-10 years till plant maturity is achieved?**
- *The fencing will be approximately 8 ft tall and is chain link but can be coated with vinyl. A vegetation maintenance plan will be part of the Article 10 permit conditions.*
- 46. Will you receive subsidies? Yes or NO. Don't offset this question by saying you only get paid when you produce a product. Simple Yes or No?**
- *No, Hecate will not receive subsidies. Hecate will be paid for the MWhs and Renewable Energy Credits it produces.*
- 47. Will you apply to Columbia County Industrial Development Agency for PILOT tax status? If you don't apply, what is the estimated tax bill estimated in millions of dollars? If you do apply, what will the new tax amount be (estimated in millions of dollars)?**
- *Hecate has introduced itself to the Columbia County Industrial Development Agency but has not applied for a tax structure agreement. Based on similar sized projects in New York State we expect to pay \$5-7 million over the life of the Project.*
- 48. The NREL has stated that NYS has the potential to install 46.6 GW of rooftop solar PV. Shepherd's Run is but one option but is being pursued to maximize profit. Why is this a wrong statement?**
- *We all need to do our part to combat climate change impacts. Rooftop solar is much more expensive [usually 3X] than utility scale projects. It's important to consider how many of those households are willing and able to commission rooftop solar as well.*
- 49. Community benefits: Rail trail, the reason people like to bike here is the viewshed, which your Project will materially alter for decades. How do you address the possible negative impact on the usage of the rail trail?**
- *Our aim is to work with the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and the Town of Copake to improve the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, which goes through a portion of the project site. We think people who bike and other outdoor enthusiasts will appreciate the purpose of the Project and the positive impacts it has for our environment.*
- 50. What risks does this pose, i.e., extreme weather, etc.?**
- *The Project will be built to withstand Category 5 wind speeds.*
- 51. How will they be disposed of?**
- *The Project will secure a letter of credit to fund the entire cost of decommissioning and return the land back to its original form. The security will remain in place with the project company regardless of project ownership. Panels and the Project's infrastructure are comprised of approximately 90% recyclable materials like glass, steel, aluminum, copper (in wires, silicon and plastic).*
- 52. What specific efforts will Hecate make and what specific to hide the view of the panels? What about in elevated locations?**
- *After the initial layout was presented on December 9, 2020, Hecate commenced its Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), which is a comprehensive analysis of visual impacts caused by the Project. The results of the VIA will dictate what type of screening is required and the type of screening will be determined with landscape architects.*

**53. Will Hecate disclose the solar panel manufacturer and the precise panel information or keep this a secret?**

- *Hecate has not chosen a solar panel manufacturer at this time due to the early stage of the Project.*

**54. How will the panels across noncontiguous parcels be connected via underground or overhead power lines? When will this be decided? Are the above ground transmission lines similar to the depiction on slide 8 of your presentation?**

- *Electricity generated by the Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will be collected by underground collection lines that feed into a collection substation near the existing substation. The power will then be transmitted to the existed substation, where it will feed into the local distribution grid where excess power will be evacuated to the nearest electricity demand centers in Columbia County and nearby NY counties.*
- *No transmission towers will be built. A few new poles may be placed but they would be built to improve existing poles.*

**55. How many inverters are needed? Where are inverters located? How do inverters work? How are inverters powered?**

- *The Project will use approximately 20 inverters to turn the power from direct current (DC) voltage to alternating current (AC) voltage. To understand how inverters work requires a deep knowledge of electrical engineering. However, the main objective of inverters is to take power produced from the panels from DC to AC, where AC power is what our homes and appliances are electrically designed to use.*

**56. How will any additional community services required to support the post-construction facility be funded; from the huge amount of additional taxes Hecate/landowners will be paying?**

- *Construction activities for the Project require limited to no municipal resources. A road maintenance plan and traffic plan will be included in the Article 10 permit conditions.*

**57. What are the estimated incremental costs to the Town of Copake as a result of the construction and operation of the Project?**

- *The Project will be responsible for the costs to build and operate the facility. The Town of Copake will not bear any investment or operating costs associated with the Project. However, it will receive new tax revenues over 20 years, amounting to \$5-7 million.*

**58. You say 200 jobs – what are they and what skills are required? How long will the jobs last? Are these all local jobs or will you bring in workers from other locations?**

- *Hecate estimates that the project construction activities will support approximately 200 skilled and unskilled jobs. These jobs will last approximately 9-12 months, the estimated time to construct the Project. As a company policy, Hecate sources local labor whenever practicable.*

**59. To what extent will the Project affect the safety of the local supply of drinking water?**

- *The Project is expected to improve the local water supply through the reduction or elimination of pesticides that are currently used in farming operations. The Project will consume no water.*

**60. What wildlife studies have you done?**

- *Winter raptor studies, breeding bird survey, and critical habitat assessment.*

**61. Detail the ways in which the Project plans to be a good neighbor.**

- *The Project will:*

- i. not use municipal resources during its operation,*
- ii. provide new tax revenues of \$5-7 million over 20 years,*
- iii. create new construction jobs and 2-3 permanent jobs,*
- iv. improve water quality by reducing pesticides currently used in farming operations,*
- v. allow for soil recharge through rest,*
- vi. support local farmers,*
- vii. be quiet throughout the life of the Project.*
- viii. support co-development programs for produce/livestock farming, apiaries, and pollinator crops, and*
- ix. help mitigate climate change impacts to preserve the region's remaining natural environment.*

**62. Detail the ways you plan to preserve the town's reputation as a community of rural charm.**

- *Hecate will work with Town officials to detail a plan.*

**63. When will Hecate outreach to visual stakeholders?**

- *After the initial layout was presented on December 9, 2020, Hecate commenced its Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), which is a comprehensive analysis of visual impacts caused by the Project. The results of the VIA will dictate what type of screening is required and the type of screening will be determined with landscape architects.*
- *Outreach will take place in January 2021.*

**64. Will screening vegetation be mature plants or saplings?**

- *Vegetation specifics will be determined as part of the Article 10 permitting conditions based on the VIA, soil samples, and topographic features.*

**65. Large blocks of open farmland and forest are critical for movement of wildlife. How will Hecate ensure that hundreds of acres of fenced in land does not inhibit movement of wildlife?**

- *Hecate studies the land to understand the ambient conditions for critical habitat for threatened and endangered species. To date and without all of these studies complete, the Project would not inhibit movement of threatened and endangered species. The Project will also protect over 200 acres of wetlands and streams that will continue to provide habitat for decades to come.*

**66. How will the panels be recycled? Can they be recycled?**

- *Recycling of panels can take place through the separation of the core components of the panels and panel support structures. The overall system is comprised of approximately 90% recyclable materials like glass, steel, aluminum, copper (in wires), silicon and plastic.*

**67. Are you only using existing fields, or do you plan to clear any land as part of this Project? If so, where?**

- *Hecate does its best to avoid tree clearing. Once a final design is in place, Hecate will calculate the land where trees may need to be removed.*

**68. The panels pictured in your deck didn't look like fully tracking panels to me. Am I wrong? To my eye they looked like azimuth tracking if anything. Will the panels be similar to the trackers you can see in Livingston backyards? I'm interested for my own interest in what this will all look like and also in terms of building trust. As much as possible, it would be helpful to see the actual panel designs in your visualizations.**

- *In the next open house event, which will be focused on visual impacts and mitigation, we will include images of tracking panels vs. fixed-tilt and discuss the main differences.*
- 69. Finally, will you be doing visualizations from elevated perspectives? The road experience is one thing, but I think most people are concerned about the viewshed from the second floor or sites elevated well above the road.**
- *After the initial layout was presented on December 9, 2020, Hecate commenced its Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), which is a comprehensive analysis of visual impacts caused by the Project. The results of the VIA will dictate what type of screening is required and the type of screening will be determined with landscape architects.*
  - *The VIA and the associated survey will determine which vantage points are used to create visualizations.*
- 70. I understand you have committed to burying the transmission cables. Can you confirm that? Are 100% of these cables buried? How deep will they be buried?**
- *Yes. Hecate can confirm these distribution collection cables will be buried. The Project will use underground collection lines, which will be 3-10 ft below the ground level. There are no health or environmental issues with these types of lines as they exist all around us.*
- 71. Specifically addressing the panels north of Route 23. You are running the object through a stream bed that flows down from my property. How far away from the stream bed will the panels be at the closest point. Can you furnish the local, state and DEC guidelines and any approvals from each?**
- *100 ft will be the setback from DEC streams and wetlands. Under the Freshwater Wetlands Act (Article 24), a 100-foot "adjacent area" is regulated by NYSDEC to provide protection to NYSDEC-regulated wetlands. Certain streams are regulated by NYSDEC under the Protection of Waters Program (Article 15). For NYSDEC-regulated streams, the stream as well as the adjacent bank, which generally is considered to not extend more than 50 feet horizontally from the stream, are regulated. Wetlands and streams may also be regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act. Permit requirements/approvals required will be determined as the project's design is finalized.*
- 72. Fencing: How high will your fencing be, can you furnish a picture of the exact fencing you are proposing?**
- *The fencing will be approximately 8 ft tall and is chain link but can be coated with vinyl. A vegetation maintenance plan will be part of the Article 10 permit conditions. In the next open house, which will focus on visual impacts, Hecate can present the different fencing types that can be used.*
- 73. Are you installing lighting on your Project that will illuminate at night?**
- *There will not be lighting on the Project but may be security lighting near the substation.*
- 74. How many feet from Two Town Road will the closest part of your Project be?**
- *The project design uses 150 ft setbacks from roads and 100 ft setbacks from other parcels and DEC wetlands.*
- 75. Can you describe in detail your proposed buffer planting along route 23 and up Two Town Road. How many trees per linear foot, what species, how high will the plantings be, and what is your maintenance plan to provide proper buffer should any of these trees die.**

- *Once a final design is in place and once all of the visual assessment survey results have been collected, a vegetation plan will be developed. In addition to the vegetation plan, a vegetation maintenance plan will also be developed and used as part of the permit conditions in the unlikely case that vegetation that is planted during construction dies during operations.*

**76. Where specifically will the battery storage be along two town road, how many units, what are the dimensions and buffer plantings proposed.**

- *The electricity storage regulatory framework is still under development in New York State. Until the electricity storage framework has been decided, Hecate will keep battery storage as an option to the Project. It has heard the concerns voiced by the local community and will take that into consideration for its ultimate decision on siting a battery storage project.*

**77. Have more industrial zones or places which would suffer far less negative visual and environmental impact (and economic impact to homeowners) been considered? Were there any other options? Are there still any other options?**

- *As noted in the Open House on December 9, 2020, building solar projects on industrial and brownfield sites comes with complexities related to environmental remediation, additional engineering costs, and limited utility scale interconnection. As part of the Article 10 permit application, Hecate will assess project alternative layouts within the 900 acres that Hecate has studied over the past few years.*