



**REAL ESTATE SURVEY FOR
GD JOHNSTON WINSOR III SOLAR FACILITY
112 WINSOR AVENUE
(AP 59, LOT 15)
JOHNSTON, RHODE ISLAND**

Presented to: Town of Johnston
Zoning Board of Review
Thomas Lopardo, Chairperson

Anthony Pilozzi, Vice Chairperson
Joseph Anzelone
Charles Ainabe
Richard Fascia

Dennis Cardillo, Alternate
Albert Colannino, Alternate

For: Mr. John Mancini
Attorney at Law
Mancini Carter, PC
56 Pine Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

By: Thomas O. Sweeney, SIOR
SWEENEY REAL ESTATE & APPRAISAL
One Turks Head Place, Suite 850
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Property Type: Solar Array

Date: July 17, 2023





Mr. Chairman and Members of the Zoning Board of Review:

At the request of John O. Mancini, Esq., I have inspected the real estate located within the Town of Johnston, identified as GD Johnston Winsor III, located at 112 Winsor Avenue, otherwise designated as Lot 15 on Plat 59 of the Tax Assessor's Plats of the Town of Johnston, State of Rhode Island. In addition to my inspection, I have reviewed the surrounding properties and the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Johnston. The purpose of my inspection and review was to determine the effect, if any, that the granting of the petitioner's request for a special use permit would have on the value of surrounding properties and the area in general. The applicant is proposing to develop ground-mounted solar arrays on the subject property.

The subject property is located at 112 Winsor Avnue in the northwest section of the Town, just south of the Town line with Smithfield and just east of the Town line with Scituate.. Land uses on adjacent properties are primarily single family residential or undeveloped.



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The subject property consists of an irregularly shaped parcel of land with multiple frontages on Winsor Avenue. It has an overall area of 159.15± acres. The property is known as the Steere farm and portion of the land have been cleared and historically utilized as farmland with the remainder being undeveloped. There are two single family homes and some outbuildings, which will be removed or relocated.

The applicant is proposing solar arrays on the property with all of the proposed arrays being located within the interior of the parcel with access limited to a gravel service road. The applicant proposals comply with the Town's requirements for this type of development including screening, which will be accomplished by a combination of existing buffer and supplemental buffering around the actual facility.

In addition to my own inspection of the surrounding neighborhood and review of the plans, research was completed to determine prior studies regarding the impact of solar farms on nearby properties. Until very recently, there had been no research that has been published regarding solar farms in Rhode Island or nearby states. The most comprehensive studies found were completed in August 2018 on a proposed solar farm in McLean County, Illinois by CohnReznick LLP (<https://www.mcleancountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13192>), in May 2018 on a proposed solar farm in Kendall County, Illinois by CohnReznick, LLP (<http://www.co.kendall.il.us/wp-content/uploads/Attachment-29-Property-Value-Study.pdf>) and in February 2016 on a proposed solar farm in Mebane, North Carolina by Kirkland Appraisal, LLC (<https://www.chathamnc.org/home/showdocument?id=393550>)

The studies involved a significant number of paired sales analysis in order to determine what, if any, impact there was. Paired sales analysis is an appraisal technique

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used to find the value of one particular attribute. The appraiser locates two sales where the only difference is the attribute being appraised; the difference in value is considered to be the value of the attribute. In this case, the attribute was the impact of the proximity of the property to a solar farm. The studies concluded that:

Mclean

*Based upon our examination, research, and analyses of the existing solar farm uses, the surrounding areas, and an extensive market database, we have concluded that **no consistent negative impact has occurred to adjacent property that could be attributed to proximity to the adjacent solar farm, with regard to unit sale prices or other influential market indicators.** This conclusion has been confirmed by numerous County Assessors who have also investigated this use's potential impact.*

Kendall

Considering all of this information, we can conclude that since the Adjoining Property Sales (Test Area Sales) for the existing solar farms analyzed were not adversely affected by their proximity to solar farms, that Properties surrounding other solar farms operating in compliance with all regulatory standards will similarly not be adversely affected, in either the short or long term periods.

Mebane

*The matched pair analysis shows no impact in home values due to the adjacency to the solar farm as well as no impact to adjacent vacant residential or agricultural land. **The criteria for making downward adjustments on property values such as appearance, noise, odor, and traffic all indicate that a solar farm is a compatible use for rural/residential transition areas.** Similar solar farms have been approved adjoining agricultural uses, schools and residential developments. Industrial uses rarely absorb negative impacts from adjoining uses. The adjoining residential uses to other solar farms have included single family homes up to \$260,000 on lots as small as 0.74 acres. The solar farm at the Pickards Mountain Eco Institute adjoins a home that sold in January 2014 for \$735,000 and in proximity to lots being sold for \$200,000 to \$250,000 for homes over a million dollars.*

Based on the data and analysis in this report, it is my professional opinion that the solar farm proposed at the subject property will maintain or enhance the value of adjoining or abutting property and that the proposed use is in harmony with the area in which it is located.

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At the end of September 2020, Vasundhara Gaur and Corey Lang of the University of Rhode Island produced a report (Property Value Impacts of Commercial Scale Solar Energy in Massachusetts and Rhode Island). This report looked at statistical information to ascertain what if any impact solar arrays have on nearby properties. Dr. Lang has stated that he does not take buffering or screening into account in his analysis. The study indicated that there is potential for negative impact on properties adjacent to solar developments but also noted that;

Solar development on landfills and industrial areas or in rural areas have smaller and statistically insignificant effects on prices.

In April of 2021, Dr. Lang and his associates published another study, (Incorporating Resident Preferences into Policy Recommendations for Utility-Scale Solar Siting in Rhode Island) with one of the conclusions being that if an adjacent property owner was given a choice between no development or solar development, they would choose no development, but if the choice was solar development or residential development, the statistics indicate a preference to solar development. It should be noted that the study looked at a “fully visible” facility. Lastly in March of 2023 the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory published a study of 1.8 million home sales near solar farms in six states, including Massachusetts and Connecticut. The study found that “houses within a half-mile of a utility-scale solar farm have resale prices that are, on average, 1.5 percent less than houses that are just a little farther away.” Furthermore, sales in Massachusetts and Connecticut – “had prices that were within the margins of error, which means the price effects were too close to zero to be meaningful.”

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After completing my inspection of the property and surrounding area and reviewing the Town's Zoning Code, the Town's Comprehensive Plan and review of the studies, I have come to the following conclusions:

- It is my opinion that the proposed use is compatible with surrounding land uses. That there will be no negative impact to adjacent property, or its value attributed to the proposed solar installations. The proposed use is a non-intrusive use. It will be buffered from the adjoining properties and will be unmanned. It will not create a nuisance or a hazard in the neighborhood. The buffering will provide adequate visual protection to the adjoining properties.
- It is my opinion that the proposed use will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent of the Ordinance or the Comprehensive Plan. This is based upon my inspection and the conclusions in the studies that solar farms are compatible in this type of area. Furthermore, it is my opinion that the proposed use will be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and the Ordinance which encourage and recognize solar uses. The facilities will be located on the interiors of the parcels and screened from adjacent uses.
- It is my opinion that the granting of the special use permit will not be inimical to public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community of Johnston. The proposed use will provide clean energy to the


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Grid, while also increasing the tax base of the Town of Johnston without drawing on Town services.

- Finally, it is my opinion that the proposed use will not have any negative impact on surrounding property values based upon the non-intrusive nature and screening of the use.

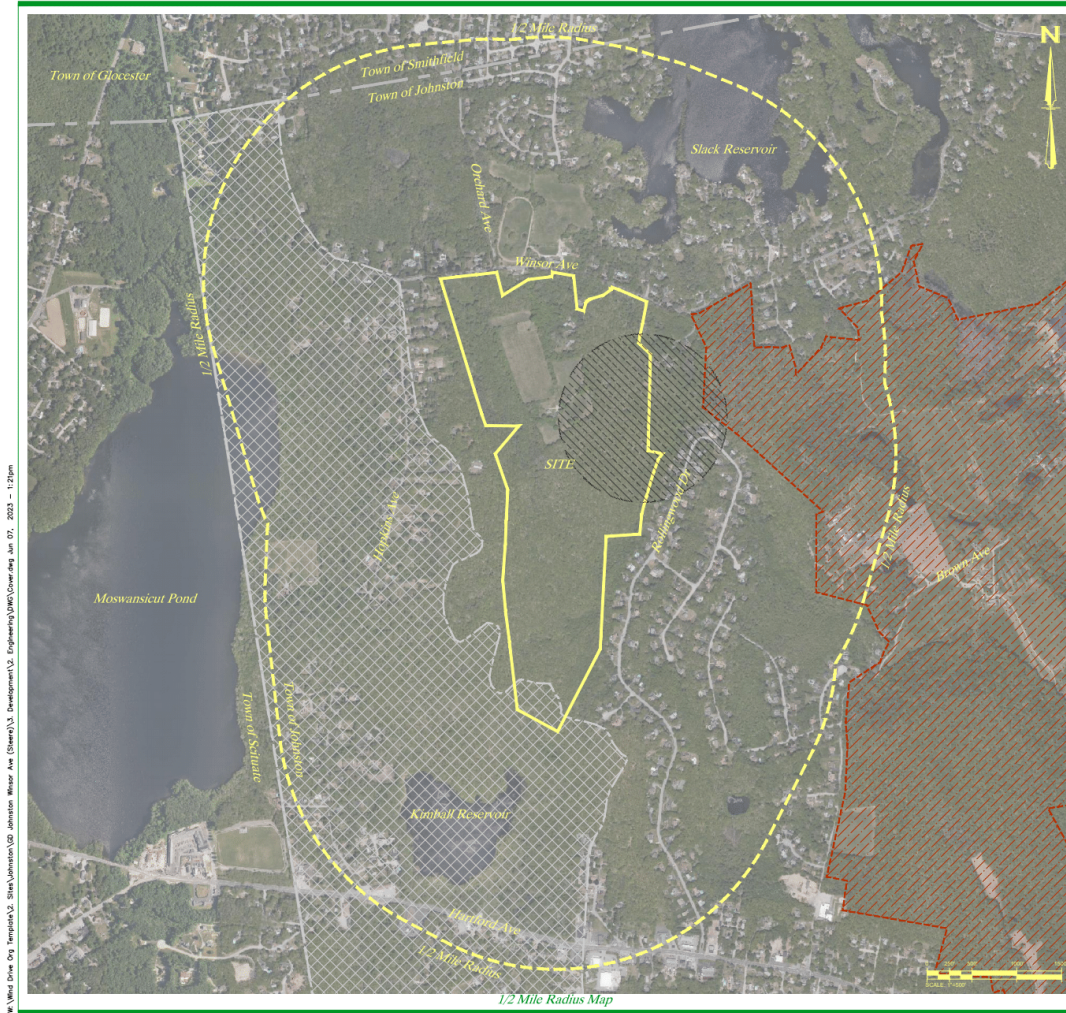
Respectfully submitted,
SWEENEY REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas O. Sweeney', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

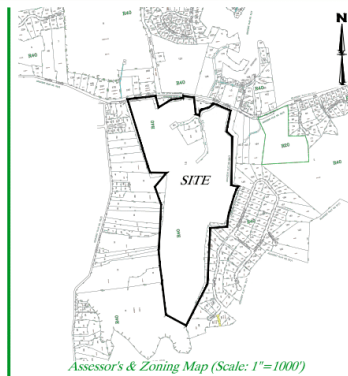
Thomas O. Sweeney, SIOR

REAL ESTATE SURVEY

GOOGLE MAP AND SITE OUTLINE



W:\Wild Drive_Og_Templates\2_Sites\Johnson\GD_Johnson_Wild_Ave (Green)\3_Development\2_Engineering\DWG\CoverMap_Jan_07_2023 - 1:250.dwg



Disclaimer:
THIS PLAN IS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED AN ACCURATE BOUNDARY SURVEY AND IS SUBJECT TO SUCH CHANGES AS AN ACCURATE BOUNDARY SURVEY MAY BE REQUIRED. INFORMATION HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND ONLINE AND CITY/TOWN GIS DATABASES. THE INFORMATION SHOWN IS ONLY AS ACCURATE AS THE INFORMATION PROVIDED THROUGH ONLINE RESOURCES. AERIAL PHOTO CAPTURED BY THE USGS DIGITAL TERRAIN ELEVATION DATA SERVICE. THE ASSURANCE AND ZONING MAP ABOVE IS TAKEN FROM A PLAN TITLED "TOWN OF JOHNSTON, ASSessor's MAP AND ZONING MAP" REVISION 03/2019. THE MAP REVISION THROUGH JANUARY 3, 2019. FOR BEST CLARITY THIS SHEET SHOULD BE REPRODUCED IN COLOR ONLY.

Existing Conditions Legend

- NATURAL HERITAGE AREA
- TOWN OF JOHNSTON - FUTURE LAND USE DRINKING WATER RESERVOIR OVERLAY DISTRICT
- BROWN AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT - IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
- TOWN BOUNDARY

APPLICANT INFO: **Johnson Winsor III, LLC**
2000 CHAMPEL VILLE BLVD, SUITE 300, CHANSTON, RI 02820

OWNER INFO: **The Winsor Family Trust c/o Suzanne T. Valentin**
118 WINSOR AVENUE, JOHNSTON, RI 02819

PREPARED BY: **Green Development, LLC**
2000 CHAMPEL VILLE BLVD, SUITE 300, CHANSTON, RI 02820

SHEET TITLE: **Aerial Street**

PROJECT INFORMATION: **City of Johnston Map III**

112 WINSOR AVE, JOHNSTON, RI 02819
ASSESSOR'S PLAT 59 LOT 15

NEW C. MOHR
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
04

SHEET NO: **G-2**

OF **13**

**QUALIFICATIONS OF THOMAS O. SWEENEY, SIOR
REALTOR AND APPRAISAL SPECIALIST**

Engaged in Real Estate business since 1983:

Principal, SWEENEY REAL ESTATE & APPRAISAL
Vice President, RODMAN REAL ESTATE
Executive Vice President, HENRY W. COOKE CO. (1983 - 1996)

Certified General Real Estate Appraiser:

Rhode Island Certification No. CGA.0A00217

Licensed Real Estate Broker:

Rhode Island Real Estate Broker's License Number B13444
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Real Estate Broker's License # 137525

Attended:

Providence College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science.

Successfully completed the following courses and examinations:

Society of Real Estate Appraisers:

Course 101: Introduction to Appraising Real Property
Course 102: Applied Property Valuation
Course 201: Principles of Income Property Appraising
Course 202: Applied Income Property Valuation
Seminar: Narrative Report Seminar
Seminar: How to Appraise Apartments
Seminar: Overview of Income Capitalization

American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers:

Course 1A1: Real Estate Appraisal Principles
Course 1A2: Basic Valuation Procedures

Appraisal Institute

Standards of Professional Practice, Parts A & B
Seminar: Feasibility Analysis & Highest and Best Use Analysis

Guest Instructor:

University of Rhode Island Extension Division
"Real Estate Fundamentals"
"Real Estate Finance"

**QUALIFICATIONS OF THOMAS O. SWEENEY, SIOR
REALTOR AND APPRAISAL SPECIALIST**

Qualified Expert Witness:

City of Providence, Zoning Board of Review
City of Cranston, Zoning Board of Review
City of Warwick, Zoning Board of Review
City of Pawtucket, Zoning Board of Review
City of Woonsocket, Zoning Board of Review
City of Newport, Zoning Board of Review
Town of North Providence, Zoning Board of Review
Town of Coventry, Zoning Board of Review
Town of Smithfield, Zoning Board of Review
Town of North Smithfield, Zoning Board of Review
Town of Johnston, Zoning Board of Review
Town of Barrington, Zoning Board of Review
Town of Scituate, Zoning Board of Review
Qualified as a Real Estate Expert to Testify in Superior Court & Family Court,
State of Rhode Island
Qualified as a Real Estate Expert to Testify in Federal Bankruptcy Court, Federal
District Court.

Appraisals for Attorneys, Business and Homeowners

Clients include:

United States Small Business Administration
State of Rhode Island
Department of Transportation, Real Estate Division
Department of Administration, Division of Municipal Affairs
Department of Environmental Management
City of Providence
Water Supply Board
Department of Planning and Development
Department of Public Property
Solid Waste Management Corporation
Narragansett Bay Commission
Providence Redevelopment Agency
Federal Nation Mortgage Association

**QUALIFICATIONS OF THOMAS O. SWEENEY, SIOR
REALTOR AND APPRAISAL SPECIALIST**

Clients, continued:

Bank of America
Citizens Bank
Bank RI
Washington Trust
Freedom National Bank
GTECH Corporation
Locke Lord
DarrowEverett LLP
Hinckley, Allen
Adler, Pollock and Sheehan
Partridge, Snow and Hahn
Nixon – Peabody
Peabody and Arnold
Moses, Afonso
Robinson & Cole LLP
Moonan, Stratton
Lehigh - Portland Cement Co.
Kaiser Aluminum
Benny's Stores
Tenneco Gas
Rhode Island Energy