

Descriptions of albums for the Lippitt Ave. Solar project posted to Flickr.com

Interconnection:

National Grid must connect the Lippitt Ave project to the grid. The plans include the pole locations required for the Hope Road solar project first proposed in 2015. National Grid and the developers proposed destroying 243 trees along Hope Road, Lippitt Ave, and Laten Knight Road. Nearly 90 trees were saved when it was discovered that they were on protected conservation land. The power line will run underground for 1900 feet to protect that land. Hope and Lippitt have been transformed with a devastating visual impact on their rural character as seen in the before and after photographs.

The Quarry Before and After:

These photographs illustrate the extent of the destruction caused by the quarry operations. The photographs were taken November 11 and March 27 from a rise located just north of the entrance.

Wind Damage and Forested Wetlands:

The photos were taken after the March 2-3, 2018 storm. The failure to provide a vegetated buffer has exposed the conservation land trees to the effects of wind storms. A buffer would have protected the trees from severe damage. Forested wetlands of less than 3 acres do not require buffers.

The photos were taken from the Knight Farm conservation land and near the entrance along the western border.

The Monolith:

The project site had a long gentle slope from north to south dropping from a 320 foot elevation to 290 feet where there was a sharp drop to about 260-250 feet. This area is composed of Lippitt Gravelly Sandy Loam, known to be unsuitable for community development. "Excavation is difficult in this soil, and blasting is required in places."

Clear cutting and extensive grading exposed a large rock monolith extending northwest to southeast. This area became the quarry. The exposed face of the rock in photo three was underground before site preparation indicating the severe grading that has taken place. One area has suffered a 20 foot drop in soil elevation according to plans on file with the Department of Environmental Management. All photos were taken from the western boundary.

Panorama:

Another view from the western boundary taken north to south from the location of the "V" on the site plan.

The Deer Stand:

The deer stand is located on the western boundary to the right of the "V" on the site plan.

West Side Photos:

This series of photographs was taken non the west side of the project near the base of the "V" on the site plans.

Solar Project Plans

Vegetative Buffers:

The RI Department of Environmental Management requires that buffers be maintained along wetlands and waterways. The northeast corner of the project has such a buffer that ranges from 25 feet to about 100 feet. The new state siting guidelines released in February 2019 emphasize distance and vegetation recommending 50 foot setbacks treated as no-cut buffers. However, topography and solar array orientation are far more important.

Cranston's Site Plan Review Committee refused to require a vegetated buffer along the hay field and woodlot. The failure to do so has had a devastating impact on the public's conservation land.

The photos show the stark differences between the two areas as well as the critical impact of topography.

The Quarry:

Lippitt Ave. is known for the amount of ledge in the area. The developers told the Cranston Planning Commission that there was "some ledge" on the property.

They conducted blasting operations seven times between December 7th and January 18th. They blasted so much ledge that they operated their own quarry removing 80,000 cubic yards of rock. (The media has reported 40,000 or 80,000 cubic feet.)

None of this was communicated to the Planning Commission, another failure to properly vet the development. The Commission minutes for the project do not mention blasting.

The final load of gravel left the site the week of March 5th.

Traffic:

Construction Plan Reports submitted by utility scale solar developers in Ontario, Canada estimate that a 10 MW system will produce more than 700 construction vehicle trips to the site.

Cranston officials dismissed these estimates with one official telling me that I would never notice the traffic.

The daily traffic starts around 6 am or earlier in a residential neighborhood six days a week. These photos document just a few of the deliveries and they are still doing site preparation over three months into the project.

2023 January 31
Douglas Doe

A one hour traffic count taken January 26 revealed 27 separate trips on residential roads. Many of the trucks are too big to make the corner so they use the lawn and catch basin as part of the road.

Clear Cutting and Grubbing Videos:

The videos show the impact of clear cutting and grubbing on land adjacent to the Knight Farm conservation land. The three videos taken from the western boundary were shot from the same location.

The Northwest Corner of the Hay Field:

These photos show the view from the southwest corner of the hayfield before and after clear cutting.

Hayfield View:

The photos taken from the Knight Farm hay field on Burlingame Road show the conservation land's boundary before and after the clear cutting for the solar project.