



Chelsea and Apple Hill Solar Projects

March 5, 2025 - Ecos Energy LLC

INTRODUCTION

- Rodney Galton, Senior Project Manager at Ecos Energy LLC.
- Mike Buscher, Principal and Landscape Architect at T.J. Boyle Associates
- Chelsea Solar is a 2.0MW ground-mounted solar PV project and Apple Hill is a 2.0MW ground-mounted solar PV Project. Each project is located on a portion of a 27.3 acre parcel off of Willow Road.
- Chelsea Solar clearing is 9.54 acres and the panels will take up less than 5 acres.
- Apple Hill clearing is approximately 8.5 acres and the panels will take up less than 5 acres.

PROJECT PARCEL AERIAL VIEW



CHELSEA PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

- The PUC in Case No. 17-5024 held that the Chelsea Project met all of the §248 criteria (including orderly development (b)(1) and aesthetics (b)(5)).
- However, the PUC determined that because the Project would share a portion of the newly built Green Mountain Power utility line extension with the planned Apple Hill solar facility, the two projects would be considered to be a “single plant”.
- The PUC then gave us two options in the Final Order, either (i) formally merge the two projects and seek authorization of a 4.0MW facility or (ii) demonstrate that the Project does not share infrastructure with the Apple Hill solar facility. We have elected option 2. The two projects no longer share any infrastructure. The current iteration of the Chelsea Project is pending before the PUC in Case No. 23-0249-PET and Apple Hill is Case No. 24-3517-PET.

APPLE HILL PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

- The PUC denied the Apple Hill project in Case No. 8454 because of that project's purported visibility from certain off-site locations.
- This Project was redesigned to avoid that same project visibility. For example, the Project fence which the PUC held could be seen in wintertime leaf-off conditions from the Welcome Center can no longer be seen. This was accomplished by changing the overall footprint of the Project and the substantial growth in vegetation around the site over the last 10 years. On the off chance that the retention of existing vegetation does not screen the fence, as a backup measure we have developed a supplemental landscape mitigation plan to be used as necessary to screen the fence.



NO ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- Environmental Consultant has concluded that neither of the projects will have an adverse effect on outstanding resources waters, water pollution and headwaters, floodways, streams, shorelines, wetlands, soil, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, rare threatened or endangered species, necessary wildlife habitat.

NO ADVERSE AESTHETIC IMPACTS

- The PUC has already confirmed that the last version of the Chelsea Project (Case No. 17-5024) satisfied the applicable statutory criteria regarding aesthetics (248(b)(5)) and orderly development (248(b)(1)).
- The Chelsea Project is now a smaller, more compact version of that previously held to satisfy this criteria.
- As previously mentioned, the Apple Hill project was specifically redesigned to limit off-site aesthetic impacts.

“PREFERRED AREA”

- A “preferred site” for solar under the Town Plan is one where there are “existing hedgerows or other topographical features that naturally screen the entire array”. The existing hedgerows at this site will screen each Project array.
- This is how the Stark and Warner Solar facilities across Route 7 qualified as “preferred sites”. Those projects were fully forested sites that were cleared except for the remaining hedgerows around the perimeter and the Town labeled those sites as “preferred” under the Town Plan. We are seeking the same treatment as the Stark and Warner Projects because we are doing the same thing (i.e. keeping in place the dense understory and vegetation to screen the arrays).



North side of the Apple Hill project looking south towards the Welcome Center



South side of clearing of Apple Hill looking southwest



South side of clearing of Apple Hill looking southwest

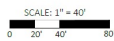




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REVISIONS	DATE	REVISIONS	DATE



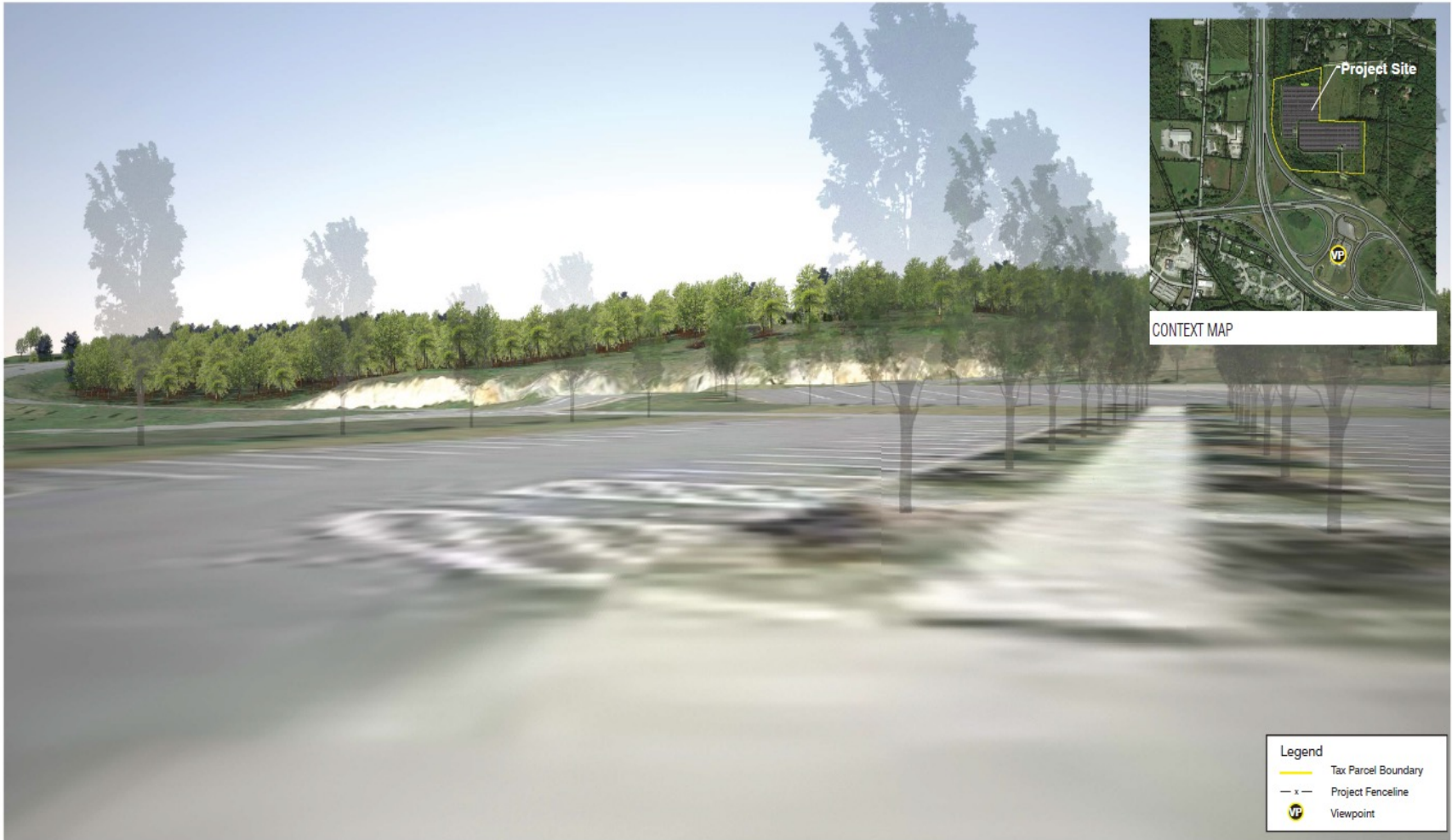




POST-CONSTRUCTION Simulation Apple Hill Solar



POST-CONSTRUCTION Simulation Chelsea Solar



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Eye Elevation : 663 ft
 View Direction: N
 Distance to Closest Panel: 1350 ft (Apple Hill Project) 1620 ft (Chelsea Project)
 Array Elevation: 724 ft (Apple Hill Project) 669 ft (Chelsea Project)

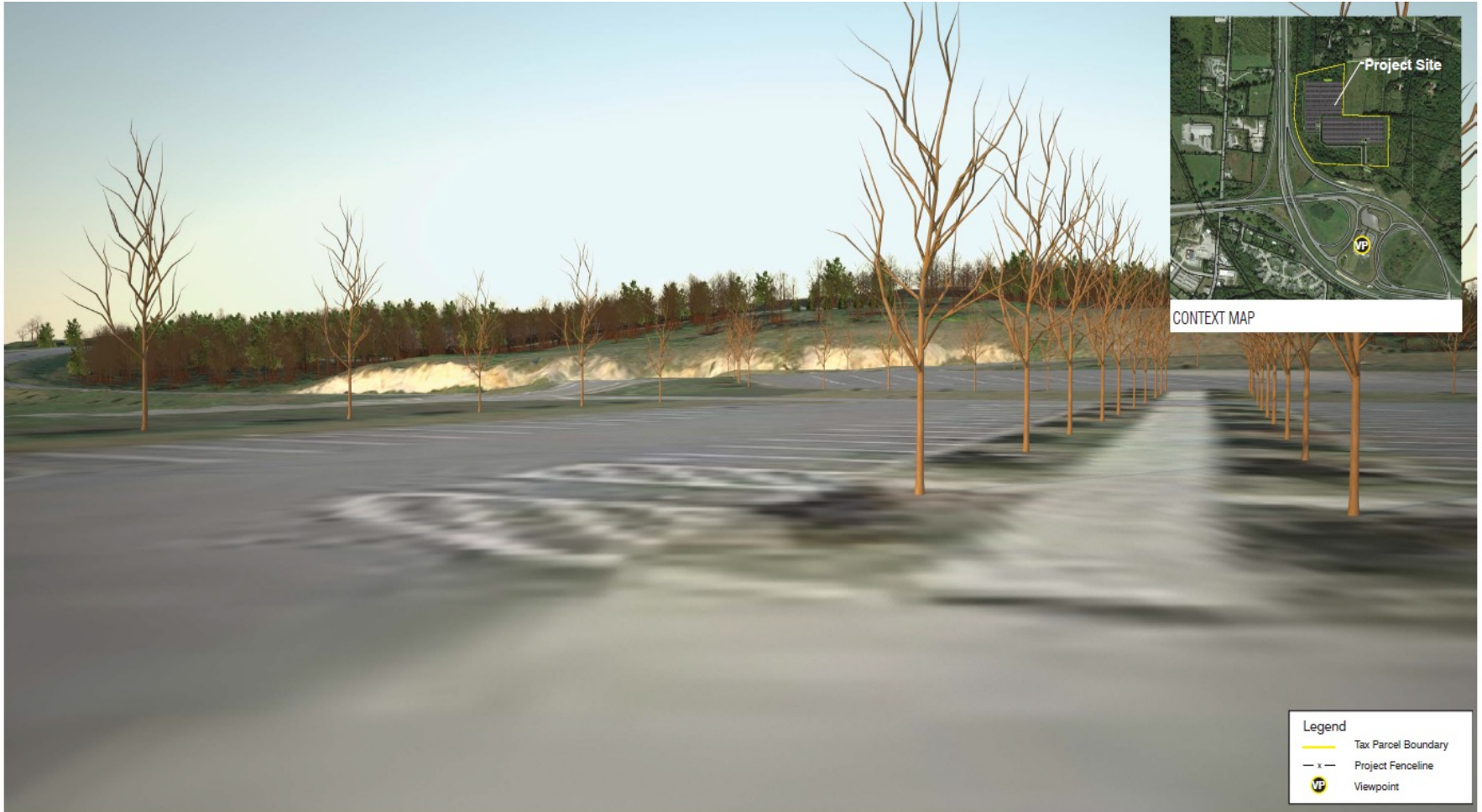
Note: The site information depicted on this 3D perspective was provided by Ecos Energy. SE Group has used this information as part of its analysis of the project, but makes no warrants as to the accuracy of it. This material is provided for review purposes only.

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| Chelsea & Apple Hill Solar Project

3D PERSPECTIVE | Welcome Center - Summer (Eye Level)






VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

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CONTEXT MAP

Legend	
	Tax Parcel Boundary
	Project Fenceline
	Viewpoint

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 EXISTING CONDITIONS | Route 7 North (Eye Level)

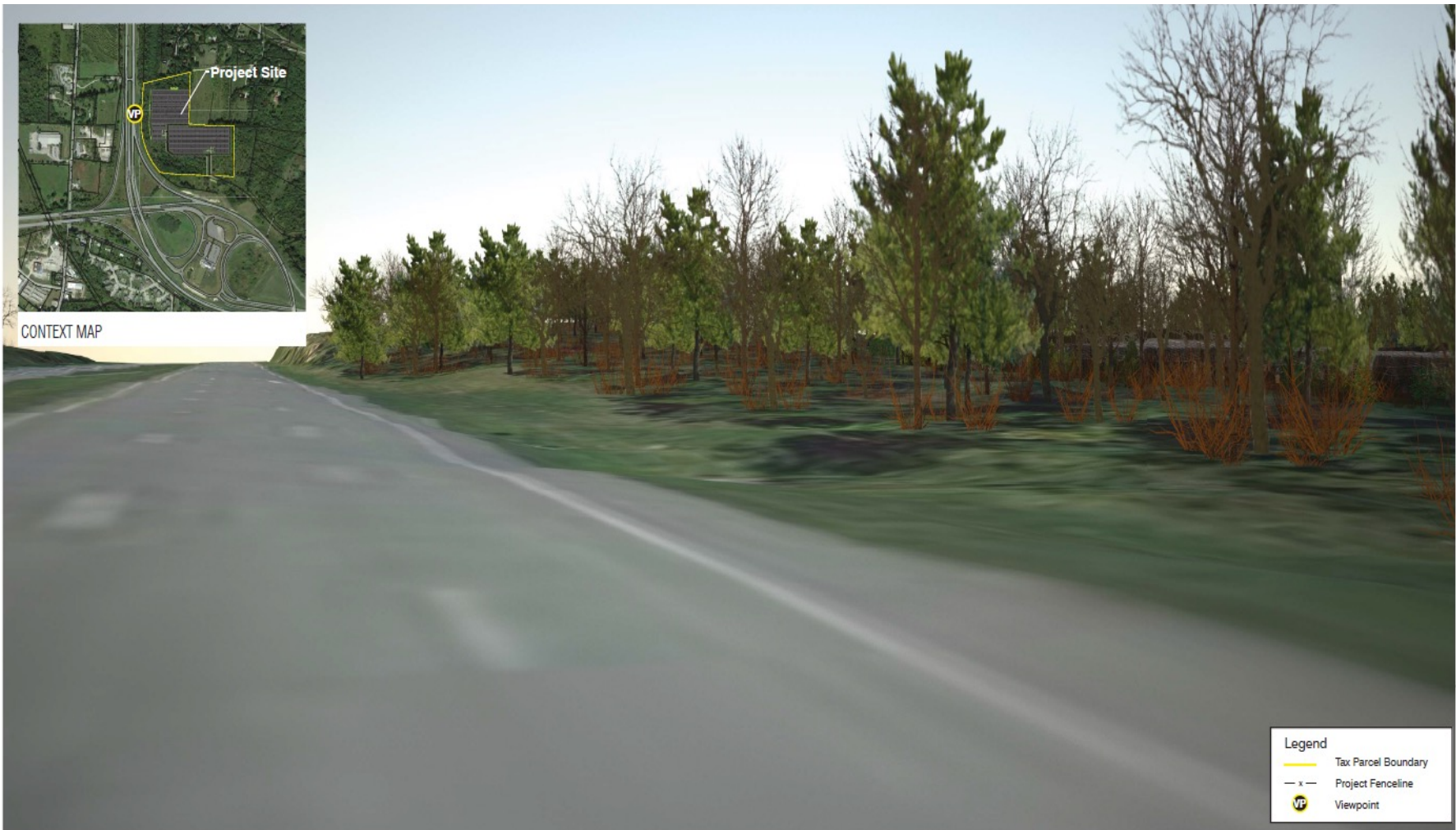


CONTEXT MAP

Legend	
	Tax Parcel Boundary
	Project Fenceline
	Viewpoint

VIEWPOINT INFORMATION
 Eye Elevation : 705 ft
 View Direction: NE
 Distance to Closest Panel: 200 ft
 Array Elevation: 710 ft

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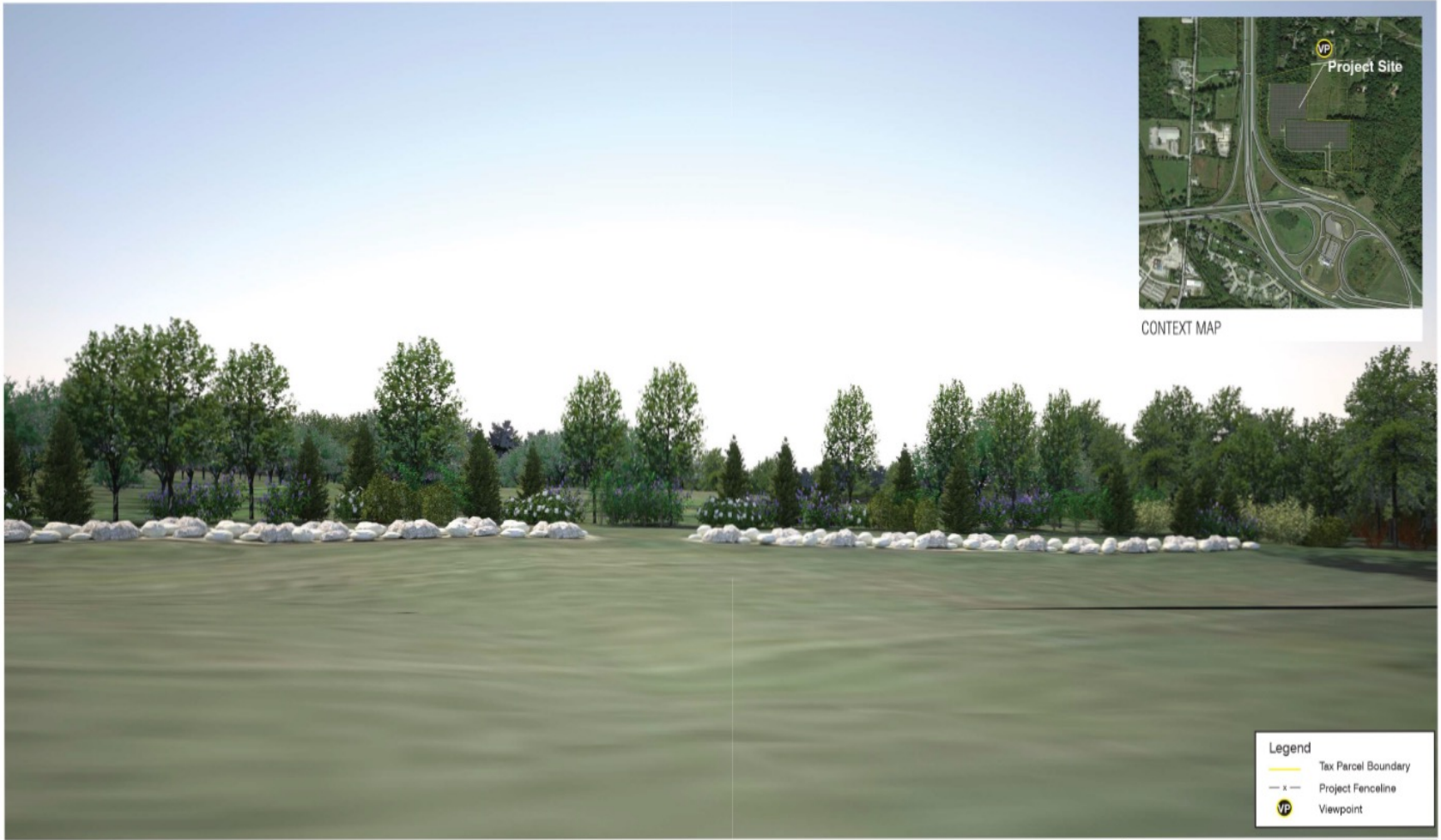
CONTEXT MAP

Legend

- Tax Parcel Boundary
- Project Fenceline
- VP Viewpoint

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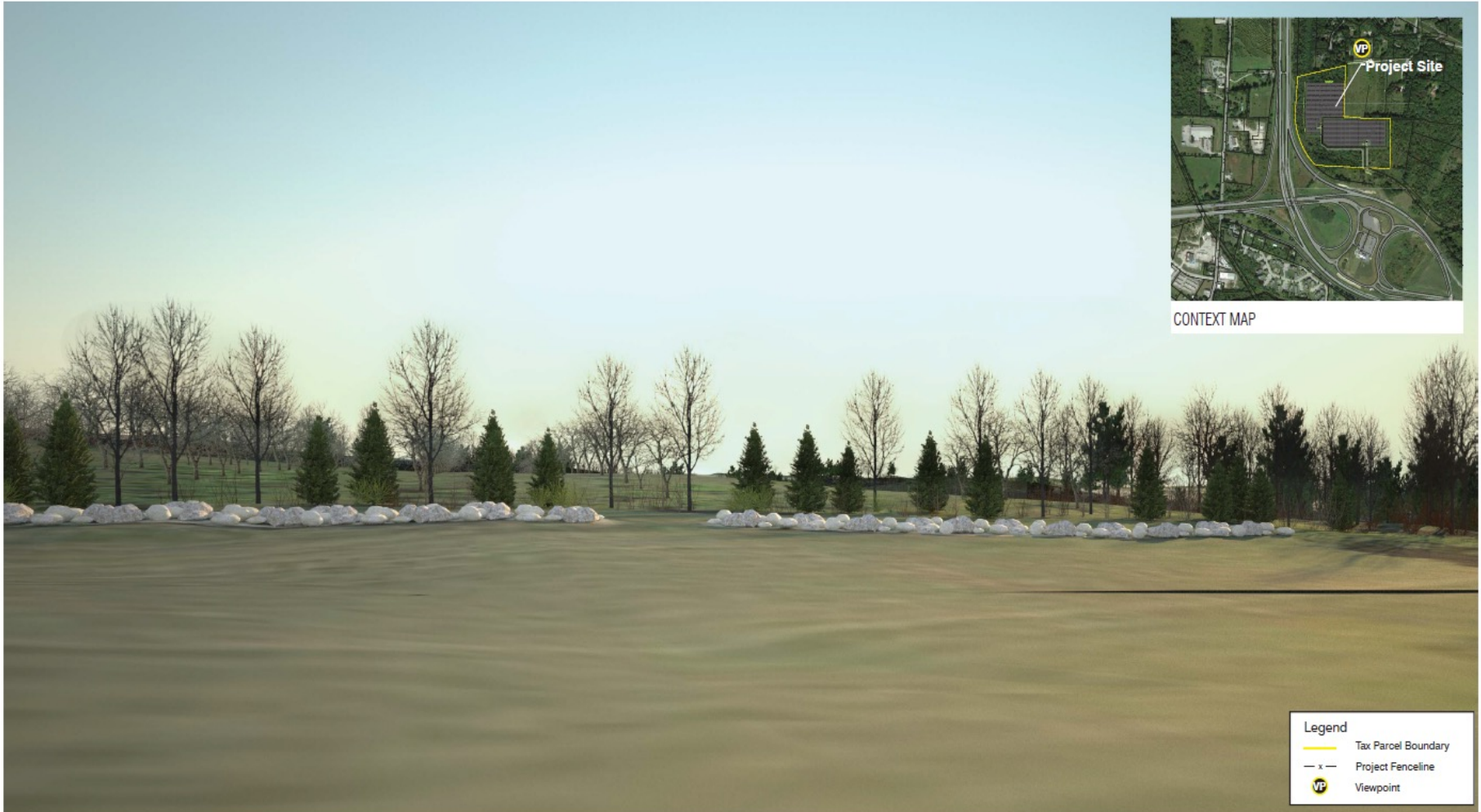
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VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Eye Elevation : 795 ft
 View Direction: S
 Distance to Closest Panel: 960 ft (Apple Hill Project) 595ft (Chelsea Project)
 Array Elevation: 740 ft (Apple Hill Project) 750 ft (Chelsea Project)

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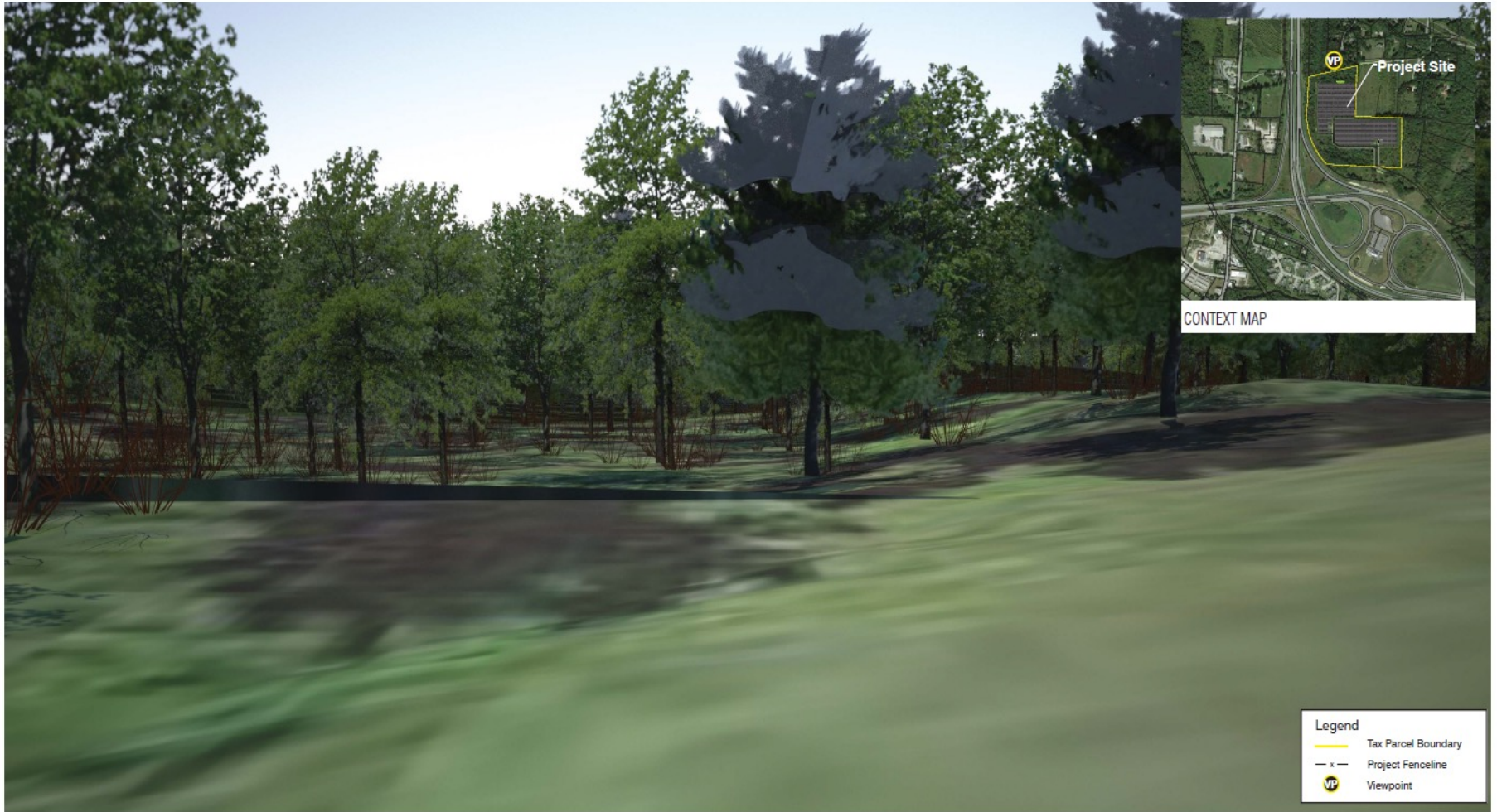
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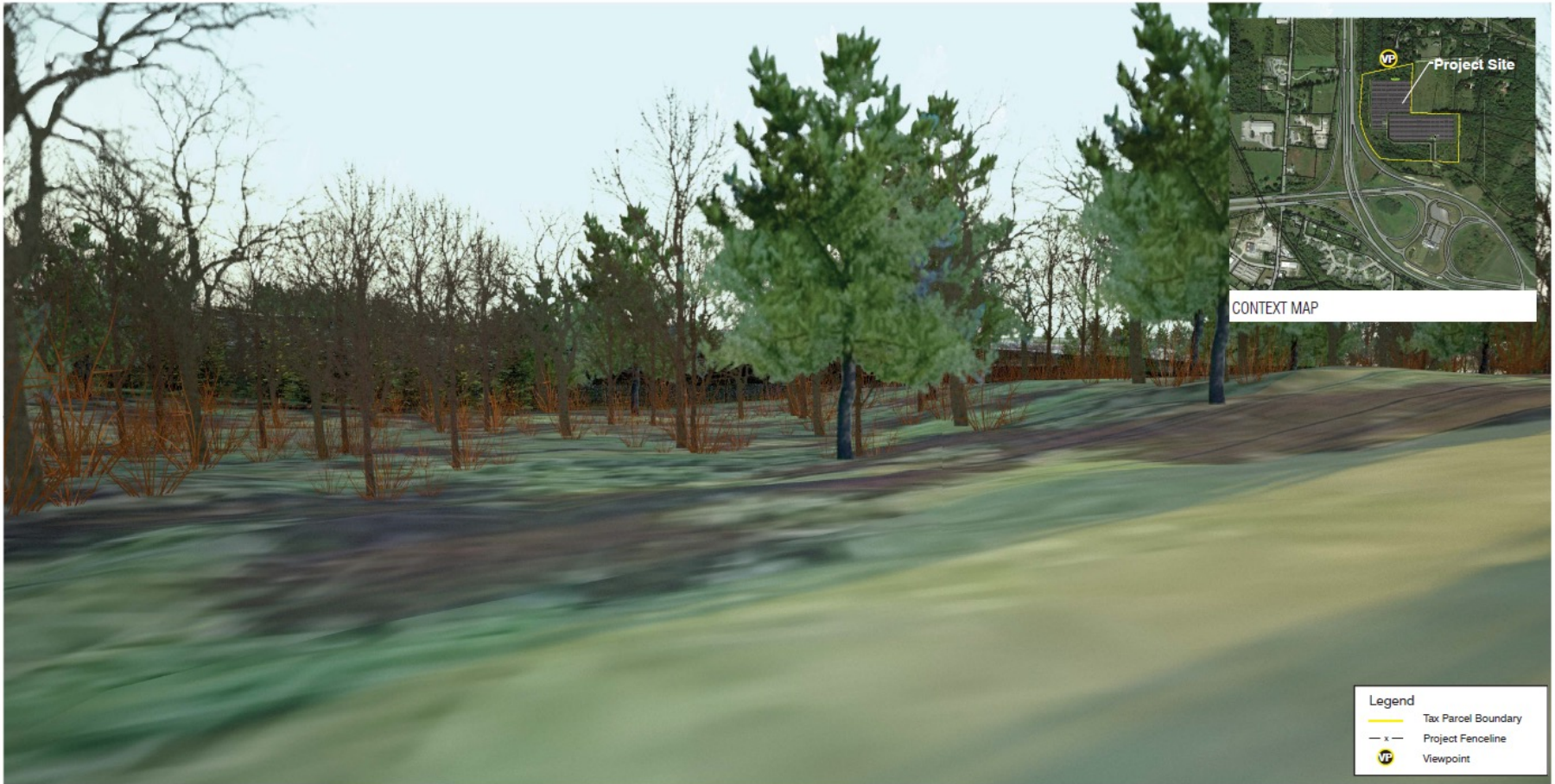


VIEWPOINT INFORMATION
 Eye Elevation : 762 ft
 View Direction: S
 Distance to Closest Panel: 350 ft
 Array Elevation: 726 ft

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Legend

-  Tax Parcel Boundary
-  Project Fenceline
-  Viewpoint



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION
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| Chelsea & Apple Hill Solar Project
3D PERSPECTIVE | Residence 2 - Winter (Eye Level)

AHS-18

May 2017



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION
 Eye Elevation : 804 ft
 View Direction: SW
 Distance to Closest Panel: 385 ft
 Array Elevation: 771 ft

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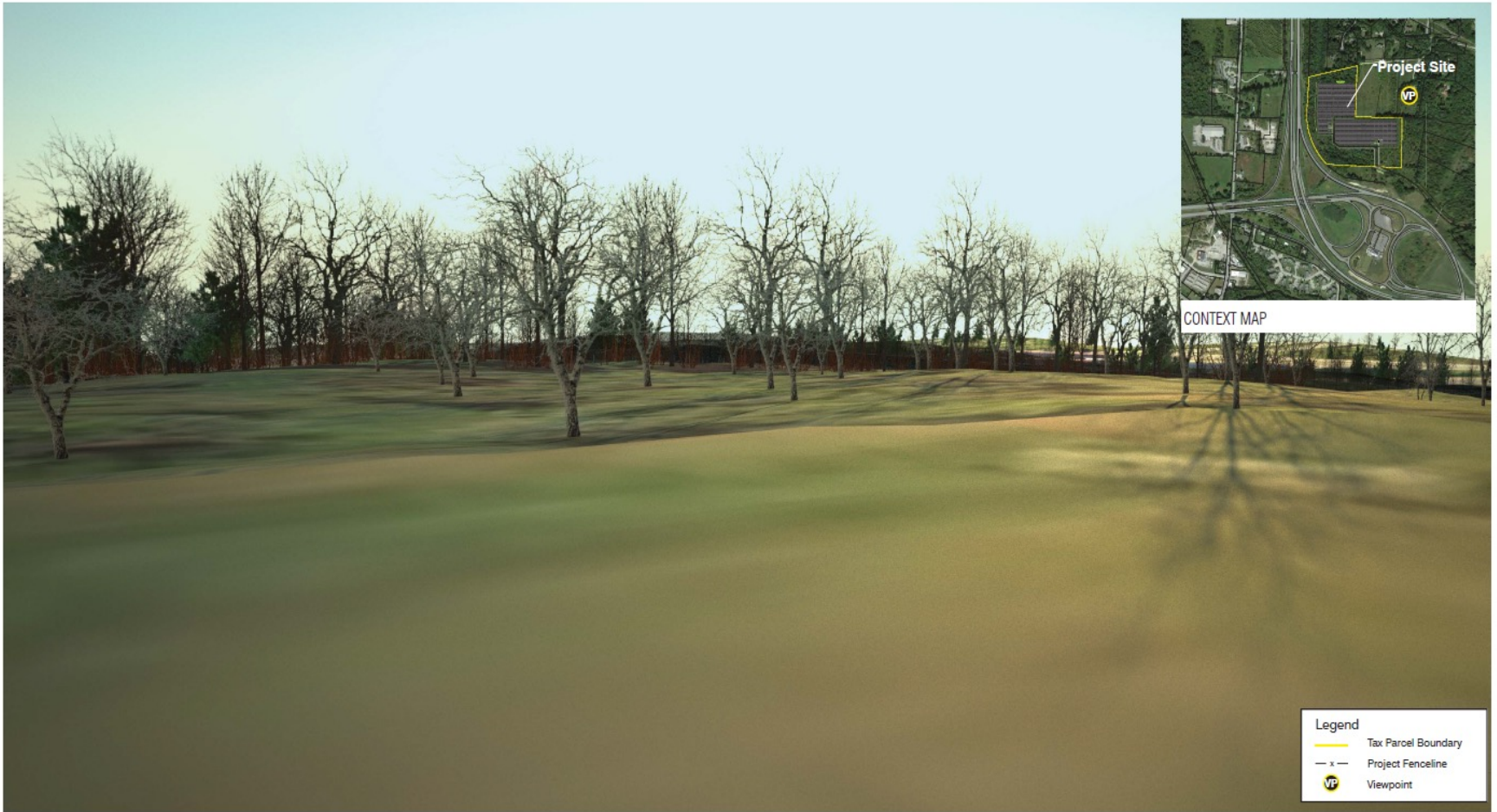
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| Chelsea & Apple Hill Solar Project
3D PERSPECTIVE | Residence 3 - Summer (Eye Level)

AHS-21

May 2017



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION
 Eye Elevation : 804 ft
 View Direction: SW
 Distance to Closest Panel: 385 ft
 Array Elevation: 771 ft

Note: The site information depicted on this 3D perspective was provided by Eco2 Energy. SE Group has used this information as part of its analysis of the project, but makes no warrants as to the accuracy of it. This material is provided for review purposes only.

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| Chelsea & Apple Hill Solar Project
 3D PERSPECTIVE | Residence 3 - Winter (Eye Level)

BENEFITS / IMPACTS CONTINUED

- Low/no burden on town services
- Increased Tax Revenue For Bennington
- Naturally Screened
- No Noise
- No Waste
- Very Low Traffic
- No Lighting
- Low Impact
- Helps Bennington Meet Its 2025 Energy Goals

QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION

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