



www.shaftsburyvt.gov

Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

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61 Buck Hill Road

Shaftsbury, VT 05262-0409

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March 13, 2023

Theresa Gilman
Permitting Services Supervisor
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Barre City Place
219 North Main Street
Barre, Vermont 05641

Re: Proposed Shaftsbury Solar Site - VT Real Estate Holdings 1 LLC.
Temporary Break in Limited Access along US Route 7

Dear Ms. Gilman,

On December 16, 2022 VHB on behalf of VT Real Estate Holdings 1 LLC (VTREH1) requested a temporary roadway to access US Route 7 directly in Shaftsbury. VTREH1 is proposing a 20MW AC solar electric generation facility on a parcel bordering the highway. VHB estimates that 15-30 trucks per day up to 80,000 pounds each will be needed during construction. This does not include busing in the 50-75 workers per day.

The Town of Shaftsbury Selectboard supports the temporary access through the limited-access right-of-way off US Route 7. There is no other route acceptable to the Town Selectboard or residents.

VHB proposed two truck routes as alternatives to the Route 7 limited-access in the letter of December 12, 2022 (attached here). The Selectboard believes that each proposed alternate route creates unacceptable risks to the traveling public, walkers, bikers and school children who use these roads on a daily basis.

The northern route would traverse 3.7 miles of gravel road along Maple Hill Road and East Road from the Arlington border to Holy Smoke Road. The southern route travels over 3.7 miles of paved road along Buck Hill Road and East Road to the intersection of Holy Smoke Road. Neither of these routes were planned for such heavy trucking and the Selectboard believes each would be severely damaged during the construction period.

The northern route is a narrow, winding, and ditch-lined road through rural residential neighborhoods favored for walking and bike riding, while the southern route would bring trucks into the designated Village Center and one of the Town's most congested intersections at VT Route 7A and Buck Hill Road.

The southern route would also significantly increase traffic on an already heavily trucked VT Route 7A. Because of the tight turn radius at the intersection of VT Route 7A and Buck Hill Road northbound trucks would have to enter the southbound lanes of VT 7A to make the sharp turn onto eastbound Buck Hill Road. This maneuver would be located right on the busiest elementary school crossing in Town. The southern route would then pass the core of the Village Center: the Town Hall, Shaftsbury Fire Department, Shaftsbury Elementary School, and Howard Park Recreation Center. Traffic is already so congested in this block that a Sheriff is posted at the elementary school to facilitate movement in the morning and afternoon.

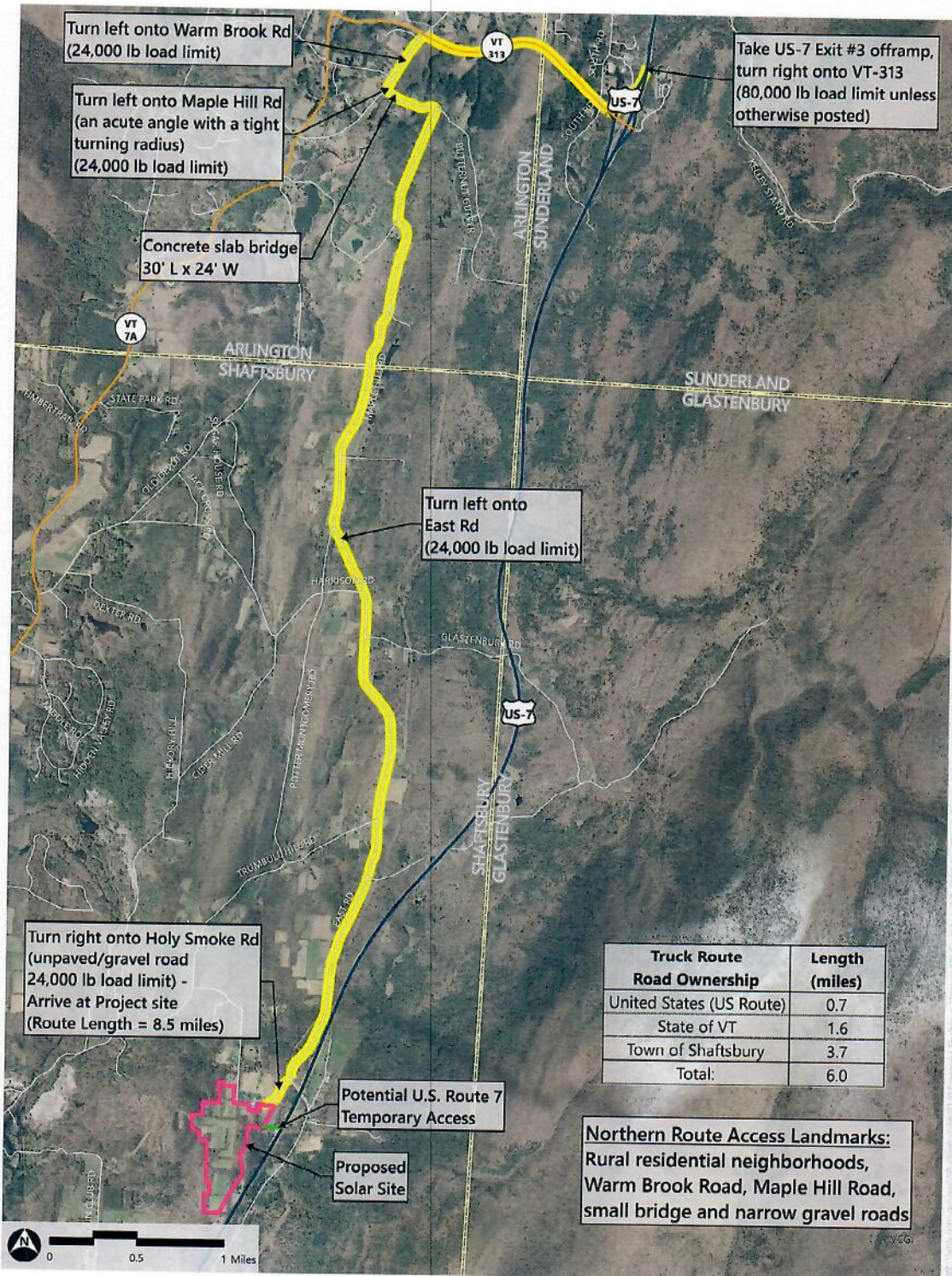
These issues do not even address the last segment of road needed if the access is not granted off of US Route 7. From either direction trucks would be directed into Holy Smoke Road. This is a small problematic gravel road that would need to be rebuilt to accept the types of trucks proposed here -- and then repaired afterwards.

With these considerations in mind the Shaftsbury Selectboard respectfully requests that the access from US Route 7 to the VTREH1 site be granted. The Board regards this as such a serious health and safety issue to the Town that representatives will be sent to present the Town's position at any hearing as you deem appropriate.

Thank you,

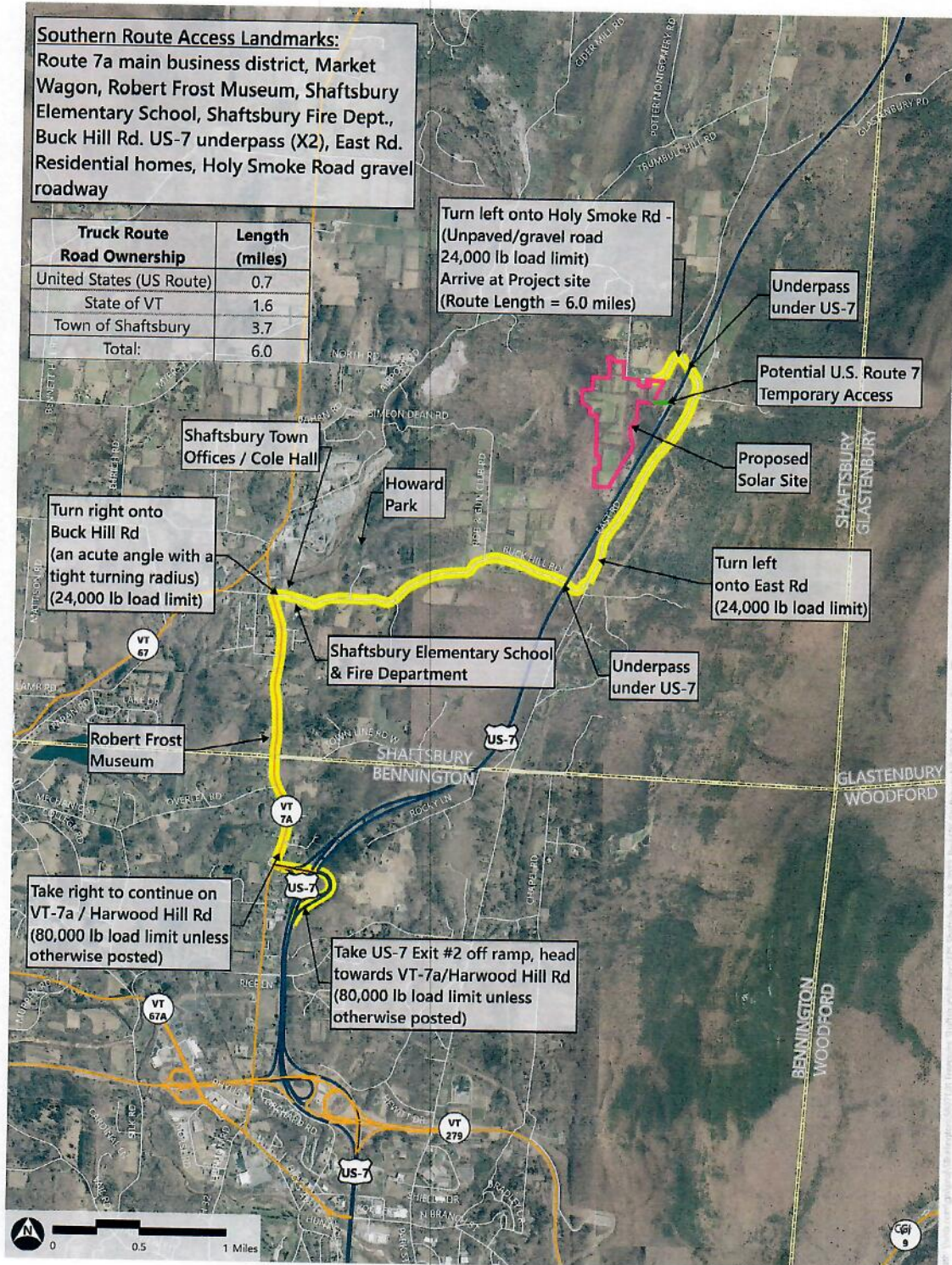


Art Whitman
Selectboard Chair



- █ Proposed Truck Route (VHB)
- █ Proposed Project Area (VHB)
- Town Boundary (VCGI)
- US Highway
- State Highway
- Road (VTrans)

Source:
 Background Imagery by VCGI (Collected in 2016)
 ANP (Vermont Agency of Natural Resources - Various Dates); VCGI (Vermont Center for Geographic Information - Various Dates); VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation - 2022); VHB - 2022



Southern Route Access Landmarks:
 Route 7a main business district, Market Wagon, Robert Frost Museum, Shaftsbury Elementary School, Shaftsbury Fire Dept., Buck Hill Rd. US-7 underpass (X2), East Rd. Residential homes, Holy Smoke Road gravel roadway

Truck Route Road Ownership	Length (miles)
United States (US Route)	0.7
State of VT	1.6
Town of Shaftsbury	3.7
Total:	6.0

Turn left onto Holy Smoke Rd - (Unpaved/gravel road 24,000 lb load limit) Arrive at Project site (Route Length = 6.0 miles)

Underpass under US-7

Potential U.S. Route 7 Temporary Access

Proposed Solar Site

Turn left onto East Rd (24,000 lb load limit)

Turn right onto Buck Hill Rd (an acute angle with a tight turning radius) (24,000 lb load limit)

Shaftsbury Town Offices / Cole Hall

Howard Park

Shaftsbury Elementary School & Fire Department

Underpass under US-7

Robert Frost Museum

Take right to continue on VT-7a / Harwood Hill Rd (80,000 lb load limit unless otherwise posted)

Take US-7 Exit #2 off ramp, head towards VT-7a/Harwood Hill Rd (80,000 lb load limit unless otherwise posted)

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- █ Proposed Project Area (VHB)
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- US Highway
- State Highway
- Road (VTrans)

Sources:
 Background Imagery by VCGI (collected in 2018)
 ANP (Vermont Agency of Natural Resources - Various Dates); VCGI (Vermont Center for Geographic Information - Various Dates); VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation - 2022; 1/18 - 2022)