



March 4, 2015

Mr. Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

**Re: City of Monticello March 3 Comment
PUC Docket No. E022/M-13-867
Xcel Community Solar Garden Program**

Sunrise Energy Ventures (“Sunrise”) writes this letter in response to a comment filed in this docket by the City of Monticello (“City”) on March 3, 2014. Sunrise is committed to continue to work with the city and other entities to help resolve any concerns that they may have regarding community solar gardens. Sunrise greatly appreciates the local planning being done by the City and understands that the success of its projects is highly dependent on the local community acceptance of the same. Sometimes it takes the two parties a while to understand the specific concerns each has or identify a mutually beneficial solution and although Sunrise is disappointed that the City chose to jeopardize that process and bring its concerns to a public forum, Sunrise is also confident it can work through any issues with the City.

From a functional or procedural standpoint, Sunrise is not clear what response, if any, is appropriate here. The City’s comment appears to be responding to the letter Xcel filed in this docket on February 10th for which the Commission sought comments on by February 24th. While Sunrise recognizes that Xcel’s Letter caught the City’s attention with regard to “utility-scale” solar projects, it is wholly unclear if this docket or any docket at the PUC is really the appropriate venue to address the concerns raised by the City. Sunrise appreciates the City’s concerns about rural land use and sprawl, for example, but is not clear what role or power the Commission has in “accommodating municipal growth factors” or characterizing certain land uses.

Sunrise recognizes that the Commission does play an important role in siting certain energy projects and that the City has raised related permitting concerns. We do not, however, believe that this is the right docket or time to address such concerns. No determinations have yet been made about the number of CSGs to move forward, how to proceed with permitting, nor has anyone sought any determination on the appropriate “size” of the project for permitting purposes. Regardless of how this project proceeds forward, Sunrise will necessarily work with the City throughout the process.



Respectfully,

Dean Leischow

/s/ Dean Leischow
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