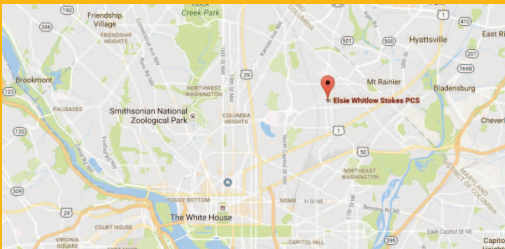


PROJECT PROFILE

Elsie Whitlow Stokes
Community Freedom PCS



PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- ✗ Aging Facility (Built 1965)
- ✗ Significant Load (30k Ft²)
- ✗ Failing Building Systems
- ✗ Leaking Roof
- ✗ Tax-Exempt Owner
- ✗ Limited Capital Budget
- ✓ Robust Utility Savings Opportunity
- ✓ Strong Solar Exposure
- ✓ Stable Property Value
- ✓ Engaged Owner

“WE IMMEDIATELY SAW A DECREASE IN OUR UTILITY BILL”

OVERVIEW

The PACE-financed solar and efficiency retrofit project at Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School (Elsie Whitlow) will provide a Washington D.C. school with timely and valuable upgrades to a facility that supports 350 pre-school and elementary school students. The energy and water saving mechanical upgrades, in conjunction with a rooftop solar PV system, will provide the school nearly \$10,000 in benefits per year, at no upfront cost. This project represents an innovative opportunity for many schools to immediately see cash flow positive results that can be used to improve the lives and education of their students.



WHAT WAS THE CHALLENGE

The Elsie Whitlow facilities faced several deferred maintenance challenges, such as a failing HVAC system and a leaking roof, which created an uncomfortable environment for the students and resulted in expensive ongoing maintenance and repairs. However, the school did not have the capital resources to address these significant needs out-of-pocket, and with a constrained annual operating budget, could not take on additional payment obligations that would have affected their bottom line. School officials trying to balance these dual constraints had few options that would allow them to meet their building improvement goals in a way that would preserve or even augment their existing operational budget.

WHAT WAS THE SOLUTION

Elsie Whitlow officials and ThinkBox Group, the school's energy project developer, turned to the District Department of Energy and Environment's PACE program for a financing solution. Through PACE, the school received 100% of the upfront project capital that it will repay at a fixed rate over a 20-year term. Amortizing the payments over this term allows the solar and efficiency savings to offset and exceed the annual PACE payments. The capital for the project was provided by Greenworks Lending, a Connecticut-based PACE lender. As an incentive to help offset the expense of hiring local community based contractors and solar installers, the project received \$198,000 from the D.C. Sustainable Energy Utility.

PROJECT SAVINGS

Annual Electricity Savings	304,110 kWh
Annual Natural Gas Savings	7,516 Therms
Annual Water Savings	73,000 Gal.
Avg. Annual Water Savings	\$ 1,200
Avg. Annual SREC Value	\$ 12,800
Avg. Annual Elect. Savings (Solar)	\$ 9,000
Avg. Annual Elect. Savings (EE)	\$116,800
TOTAL AVG ANNUAL SAVINGS	\$ 139,800
APPROX. ANNUAL PACE PAYMENT	\$ 130,000
ANNUAL NET SAVINGS	\$ 9,800

SOLAR FINANCING

The Elsie Whitlow project represents a viable funding option for renewable energy on nonprofit buildings in certain markets. The school financed 100% of a 35 kW rooftop solar PV array through PACE, allowing them to retain ownership. Since nonprofits lack sufficient tax liability to take advantage of the Solar Investment Tax Credit and the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System depreciation themselves, many often need a tax equity investor to make the project viable. Unfortunately for most small schools and churches, tax equity investors are typically unwilling to consider projects of this scale because legal and administrative costs are prohibitively high. Providers of solar power purchase agreements have also passed on projects of this scale. This market failure effectively locks community institutions out of the market for solar. In a market such as Washington D.C., however, valuable Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC) and high electricity prices can allow solar projects to be financeable even without tax credits, as was the case for Elsie Whitlow. This project design represents a viable option for schools and nonprofits in similar markets that are looking to finance small-to-medium sized solar installations with limited transaction costs.

The **CivicPACE Team** is a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) effort under the Solar Market Pathways program designed to make commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing a reality for tax-exempt organizations and non-profits. More information at: <http://civicpace.org>

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