



VIRGINIA SOLAR LAND USE NEWS OF NOTE

August 16, 2023

Solar | Augusta County

On August 8, the Planning Commission found that Fishersville Road Solar, a 2 MW, 24 acre facility developed by ESA, was not substantially in accord with the comprehensive plan. Fishersville Road Solar was the sixth proposal for a solar facility in the county. [Read more here](#) and [here](#).

Solar | Culpeper County

On August 1, North Ridge Culpeper Solar, a 26 MW, 355 acre facility developed by North Ridge Resources, withdrew its application for a Conditional Use Permit. This withdrawal followed a vote by the Board of Supervisors to uphold a Planning Commission decision that the application was not in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan on June 14. At that June meeting, the Planning Commission determined that the facility's location and soil classifications meant that it did not align with the Comprehensive Plan, but the Planning Commission nevertheless voted in favor of recommending approval to the Board of Supervisors. [Read more here](#).

Ordinance | Hanover County

On August 10, the Planning Commission recommended sending ordinance revisions, discussed in our [July 21 newsletter](#), to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will likely discuss the ordinance at their August 23 meeting. [Watch more here](#) beginning at the 2:21 mark.

Solar | Isle of Wight County

On August 17, the Board of Supervisors will reconsider Carver Solar, a 71 MW, 637 acre facility developed by Open Roads Renewables. Carver Solar was before the Board six months ago, when a motion to approve the project was defeated. Because there was no official vote to deny, the project technically remains pending. In June, Open Roads Renewables asked that the project be placed back on the agenda. [Read more here](#).

Ordinance | Northumberland County

On August 10, the Board of Supervisors tabled a revision to the solar ordinance that: (1) modifies the definition of small systems to require negotiations on compensation of impacts to the county; (2) prohibits solar facilities in R-1 Residential General and R-2 Residential Waterfront zones; (3) requires an environmental impact statement, landscape agreement, and surety; (4) requires annual report of power output; (5) updates decommissioning requirements; (6) reduces the time for revision of the decommissioning plan from every five years to every two years; and (7) increases the time to decommission a solar energy facility from six to twelve months. The Board will discuss again after a meeting with the Rural Solar Coalition. [Read more here](#).

Solar | Smyth County

On July 27, the Planning Commission voted 5-1 to recommend a Special Use Permit for a 10 MW, 150 acre solar facility, developed by Clean Footprint, a Florida based company. The project is expected to generate \$22 million in capital investment and jobs created during the construction phase. During the meeting, Commissioner Tony Dean told his peers that he could see no locally required standard that the project had not met. [Read more here](#) and [here](#).

Ordinance | Town of Tazewell

On August 8, Town Council amended the language in the zoning ordinance to include solar energy in M-1 Industrial Zones. Town Manager Tom Day noted that the town had received a number of requests and "you never know when the next one is coming up. So, we're just trying to be proactive." [Read more here](#).

Solar | Wythe County

On August 8, siting agreements for two solar projects developed by MegaWatt Farming LLC died before the Board of Supervisors due to lack of a motion to approve. The developer previously spent 16 months negotiating siting agreement terms for the two projects, JCR Solar (16.8 MW) and HSR Solar (19.9 MW). As one of a very few counties in Virginia without any zoning, siting agreements (if the project is over 5 MW) and comprehensive plan accord determinations under 15.1-2232 are the only two ways that county officials can approve or deny solar projects. [Read more here](#).

*Have a tip to share? Want to explore siting agreements and 2232 determinations?
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