



VIRGINIA SOLAR LAND USE NEWS OF NOTE

August 28, 2023

Solar | Amherst County

On August 16, the Planning Commission voted to table a Special Exception Permit determination on Piney River Solar, a 50 MW, 175 acre facility developed by Energix. The Commission plans to take up the matter again at their meeting on September 28. The Commission previously voted to recommend denial of the project in March, after which, Energix revised the application to minimize the panel array area by 175 acres, increasing setbacks, and installing more buffers. [Read more here.](#)

Comprehensive Plan | Augusta County

The County is undergoing an update to its Comprehensive Plan, which will include new goals for 2024-2044. Every 5 years, Virginia counties must update their Comprehensive Plans, and the County's was last updated in 2007. County Administrator Tim Fitzgerald noted "In 2007, no one was really talking about industrial solar, that's something that's really here today. Those types of things are something we need to look at as we go forward." [Read more here.](#)

Battery Storage | Botetourt County

On August 22, the Board of Supervisors voted to approve Gateway Grid, a 50 acre battery storage facility developed by SR Investments. The project is likely two years away from commercial operation. [Read more here.](#)

Ordinance | Charlotte County

On August 17, County Administrator directed the Planning Commission to come up with a cap on solar development to include in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Witt recommended a limit of 4% of the County's total land mass, equaling about 12,174 acres (7,791 of which is already taken up by approved projects). No deadline was given for this revision, but Witt did ask the Planning Commission to pause two projects with currently pending applications for a Conditional Use Permit. [Read more here.](#)

Moratorium | Clarke County

On August 29, the Planning Commission will consider amendments to the zoning ordinance that would prohibit new solar development. This is at the direction of a [resolution](#) adopted by Board of Supervisors on August 15. [Read more here](#) and [here](#).



Solar | Fauquier County

On August 10, the Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 to uphold an earlier Planning Commission determination that Sowego Solar, a 80 MW, 466 acre facility developed by Torch Clean Energy, was not substantially in accord with the County's comprehensive plan under 15.1-2232. More than 40 citizens attended the meeting to speak both in favor and against the facility. [Read more here.](#)

Solar | Isle of Wight County

On August 17, the Board of Supervisors approved Carver Solar, a 71 MW, 637 acre solar facility developed by Open Roads Renewables. Carver Solar was before the Board in February, where they voted against approving a Conditional Use Permit. However, because the Conditional Use Permit was never denied, it remained pending. Two Supervisors changed their vote this time, citing that solar provides aging landowners with a source of revenue, allowing them to retain ownership of the land. [Read more here.](#)

Solar | Loudoun County

On Tuesday, Dominion Energy broke ground on a 100 MW solar facility and 50 MW battery storage facility outside of Dulles International Airport. This 200,000 panel, 835 acre project is enough to power around 37,000 homes. It is expected to create 300 jobs and be completed by 2026. [Read more here.](#)

Solar | Patrick County

On August 15, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of a Special Use Permit for Fairy Stone Solar, a 169 acre facility developed by Energix. It is expected that the Board of Supervisors will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation at its next meeting. [Read more here.](#)

Solar | Smyth County

The Board of Supervisors voted to delay a Special Use Permit for a 10 MW, 150 acre solar facility developed by Clean Footprint, previously discussed in our [August 16 Newsletter](#). The Supervisors are voicing questions about the future owners of the facility and its overall impact on the County. [Read more here.](#)

*Have a tip to share? Want to explore siting agreements and 2232 determinations?
Contact us. Jared Burden, jburden@greenehurlocker.com*