



VIRGINIA SOLAR LAND USE NEWS OF NOTE

SOLAR and ORDINANCE Charlotte County

On May 16, the Charlotte County Planning Commission discussed a zoning text amendment to add battery energy storage systems (“BESS”) as a permitted use in the county. The amendment was proposed by East Point Energy, who is currently developing a BESS project in the county. The Planning Commission has 100 days, or until August 24th, to hold a public hearing and provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

The Planning Commission also conducted a 2232 review of the Lavender Solar project, a 5 MW project developed by Inovateus. The Commission voted 6-4 to find the project is substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan.

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BESS ORDINANCE Culpeper County

On May 7, the Board of Supervisors approved amendments to its zoning ordinance that add battery storage facilities as a permitted use. The amendments add utility-scale battery storage to the definition of Public Utility Generation Facilities. Another change was made to require conditional use permits for Public Utilities and Public Utility Generation Facilities in all zoning districts; now neither use is a “by-right” use in any district. The Rules Committee stated that these changes clarify and create a consistent application of the zoning ordinances for public utilities.

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SOLAR ORDINANCE Fluvanna County

On May 15, the Solar Ordinance Review Committee presented an update to the Board of Supervisors. The Committee presented two options: the creation of a new zoning district for utility scale solar, or the creation of a zoning overlay district that allows utility scale solar and minor scale solar by special use permit. It is anticipated that the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to discuss the new regulations by September 20, 2024.

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SOLAR ORDINANCE Greensville County

On June 3, the Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on a proposed amendment to remove utility scale solar from the zoning ordinance. The amendment would remove Utility Scale Solar Projects as an approved use in the A-1 zoning district, subject to two exceptions – utility scale solar is allowed on property where a business or industry is operated or as an accessory use in an approved Technology Overlay District. The Board will also hold a public meeting on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan that remove all references to utility-scale solar development. The ordinance and Comprehensive Plan amendments were drafted in response to the Board’s January resolution. The Planning Commission approved the proposed amendments during their May 14 meeting.

The Board will also conduct a public hearing on a siting agreement for County Line Solar, which has already secured a 2232 approval.

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SOLAR ORDINANCE Cumberland County

On May 16, the Board of Supervisors heard an update on the county's new solar policy. The County Administrator, told the Board that a policy could be ready for approval as early as July 2024. Cumberland currently has no clear guidelines for solar projects.

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SOLAR Hanover County

Strata Clean Energy LLC has proposed a new 72 MW, 1,477 acre solar project in Hanover. This is the largest proposal received by the county since it adopted a new solar policy in 2023. It also comes in the wake of Hanover's approval of a 1,200-acre data center in March. It is anticipated that the project will go before the Planning Commission in May or June.

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SOLAR Powhatan County

On April 29, the Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 to affirm the Planning Commissions' rejection of a proposed solar facility. In March, the Planning Commission had voted 4-1 to find SunTribe's Solomon Solar facility (3 MW) did not comply with the County's comprehensive plan.

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SOLAR ORDINANCE Rockbridge County

At the April 10 Planning Commission meeting, the Solar Committee provided an update on the status of the Solar Ordinance that is being developed for the County. The Committee expects that a joint work session will be held within the next few months to review the draft. The joint work session would involve the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and the Solar Committee.

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SOLAR ORDINANCE Washington County

On May 20, the Planning Commission approved proposed updates to its solar ordinance, adding requirements for siting agreements, solar revenue share, and decommissioning agreements. The purpose of the update is to incorporate the new state law revenue mechanisms into the County's solar ordinance, as well as update the several provisions to provide additional protections to the County. The Board of Supervisors will consider the recommendation on June 11.

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Have a tip to share? Contact us.



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