

Joe Urban

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Date: Monday, March 1, 2021 2:13 PM
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Subject: Solar Ordinance

Dear Editor,

The solar ordinance was passed by the Lancaster County Board of Supervisors by a three to two vote. As reported in this paper, it was discussed by quite a few people holding differing views of the subject. It was done very respectfully.

The effective date for the ordinance is 1 July 2021. This date will provide the county's citizens the opportunity to participate in the updating of the Land use chapter of the county's comprehensive plan. Sufficient time is available to do all the required elements before the effective date.

Why is it important that this update be accomplished now? Until now the discussion has focused on one project in the western section of Lancaster County within one mile of the current Dominion Energy 115KV transmission line running across the county from the Rappahannock River to Lancaster Creek.

But there is another transmission line running in the county. It is the current Northern Neck Electric Cooperative (NNEC) 35KV transmission line running along Route 354, also known as River Road. According to the project developers, the total of 150KV limits the solar energy to 171 Megawatts (MW). Each MW requires 8 Acres, thus consuming 1,368 acres.

The operative word is the term "current". The Dominion Energy transmission lines running from the Harmony Grove substation to the Southern shore of the Rappahannock River are understood to be capable of carrying 230KV. The original towers proposed to cross the Rappahannock would have been constructed to be capable of carrying 230KV, although only initially using 115KV lines. Not sure what the lines being constructed across the Rappahannock are capable of carrying. The White Stone Substation appears to be quite capable of energy expansion. NNEC lines are also either planned or undergoing upgrading its capabilities. When these increases occur, they will provide for more projects and contribute to the doubling of acreage used for solar energy.

The time to determine the future of the county's citizens is now. Consider it now by updating the comprehensive plan land use chapter before the solar ordinance is effective and multiple project applications be made to the county.

Sincerely,

Charlie Costello
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