



Risky proposal

I attended a public meeting held by Dominion Resources on July 1 regarding the installation of a 100MWac solar power plant and a 50MW battery storage facility in Lancaster County. The proposed site is approximately 2,900 acres or 4.5 square miles. Our county's land mass is approximately 86,267 acres or 135 square miles according to the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan (LCCP). This project will occupy nearly 3.5% of our land. Belle Isle State Park is 982 acres or 1.5 square miles; the proposed project is three times the size of the park.

Construction of the power plant will require the deforestation of the majority of the 2,900 acres. The power plant will include hundreds of thousands of solar panels east and west of Route 3 along Courthouse Road, Davis Mill Road, Avis Trail and Merry Point Road.

The project overlays waterways and marshland that feed the headwaters of the Western Branch of the Corrotoman River. LCCP has an exhibit of the USDA Soils Report depicting the Steep Sandy Land that will be impacted by the deforestation. During a year-long construction and land stabilization, stormwater runoff and erosion should be of major concern. Planting and seeding is done after the installation of the panels and will take an unknown period of time to stabilize.

The 50MW battery storage facility and substation would be on the Merry Point Road side of the project. The battery facility will include multiple shipping container sized battery sheds spaced 25 feet apart. Batteries need cooling to prevent Thermal Runaway which causes battery meltdown. In the event of an emergency, the battery pack will be allowed to burn out before a response team dismantles the structure.

The scale of this project, risks to our natural resources and potential safety hazards will cause an undue burden on our county and community.

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