



Work Session Community Solar

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

NOVEMBER 21, 2024



Community Solar

Background

- November 2023 Planning Commission initiated a text amendment for Community Solar
- Utility Scale Solar adopted October 2020
 - Permitted pursuant to Z.O. Section 3-320.5 – Electrical Generating Plants and Facilities
 - Agricultural (RA) and Industrial General (I-2)
 - Special Exception Required
 - No MW limit
 - Connect into transmission lines
- Community Solar projects =
 - 5 MW or less
 - Connect into distribution lines

Discussion Points:

- Community Solar or Small Scale Solar?
 - Dominion “Shared” Solar or
 - Any project 5 MW or less
- Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review?
 - Code of VA § 15.2-2232.H specific to solar facilities
 - Deemed in accord if permitted by-right, eligible net-metered project, eligible agricultural generator or locality waives requirement
 - All other solar shall be reviewed for substantial accord
 - May waive or require prior to or concurrent with SE
- Districts?
 - Agricultural (RA) and Industrial General (I-2) by Special Exception
 - Any additional?



Community Solar

Discussion Points (cont'd):

- Studies Required
 - Viewshed
 - Fiscal Impact
 - Wetlands
 - Cultural and Historic Resources
 - Wildlife Corridors/Habitats
 - Pollinator/Pollinator Habitats
 - Glint and Glare
- New Standards:
 - Single Parcel of Land
 - Area of Array maximum of 30 acres
 - No facility within 2 miles unless combined acreage of coverage is 60 acres or less.

Discussion Points (cont'd):

- Existing Requirements/Setbacks:
 - Access to Major Collector or higher
 - Max Height 15 feet
 - Setbacks
 - 100' from project boundary
 - 150' from existing residential dwelling
 - 1,000 feet from Corridor of Statewide Significance
 - Buffering
 - 50' buffer effectively screen project
 - Floodplain, wetlands, steep slopes protected
 - Decommissioning
- Additional concerns?