

COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE
TRANSMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUMMARY OF PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

<p>AGENDA TITLE: SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation, SP202200015 Woodridge Solar & SE202200035 Woodridge Solar - Critical Slopes Special Exception</p> <p>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Solar-energy electrical generation facility and associated substation producing approximately 138 megawatts. The panels will encompass approximately 650 acres. A special exception has been requested to allow disturbance of critical slopes.</p> <p>SCHOOL DISTRICT: Scottsville, Walton, Monticello</p>	<p>AGENDA DATE: April 5, 2023</p> <p>STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Filardo, McDermott, Fritz</p> <p>PRESENTER (S): Bill Fritz</p>
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BACKGROUND:

At its meeting on December 13, 2022, the Planning Commission (PC) voted 6:0 (one position vacant) to recommend approval of SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation and SP202200015 Woodridge Solar.

DISCUSSION:

The PC endorsed the conditions recommended by staff with the addition of conditions for monitoring of the Vegetation Management Plan, inclusion of as-built plans in the decommissioning plan, and a requirement that the development and updating of the decommissioning plan be done by qualified individuals. The language of these conditions were refined after the PC meeting to be in the proper resolution form and to align with language used in previous commercial solar approvals. The majority of the changes are not substantive and are included in the resolution for approval. However, the applicant has requested two substantive changes: (i) that the use be required to commence within five years instead of three (condition 9) and (ii) that the Zoning Administrator be authorized to approve alternative measures if VA Pollinator-Smart Certification is not possible (condition 16).

The applicant submitted detailed topographic information to address staff concerns about five critical slope areas proposed for a special exception. The staff report presented to the PC included an analysis of the proposed special exception. The PC did not discuss the proposed disturbance of critical slopes. A revised review of the critical slopes exception request is included as Attachment D. After the preparation of the staff report for the PC, additional public comment has been received (Attachment E).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached resolutions to approve SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation (Attachment F), SP202200015 Woodridge Solar Project (Attachment G), and SE202200035 Woodridge Solar - Critical Slopes Special Exception (Attachment H).

ATTACHMENTS:

- A – Planning Commission staff report
 - A1. Applicant Narrative
 - A2. Special Exception Request
 - A3. Concept Plan
 - A4. Chapter 18, Section 5.1.12
 - A5. Climate Action Plan
 - A6. Public Comment

- B – Planning Commission action letter
- C – Planning Commission minutes
- D – Revised Critical Slopes Special Exception Analysis
- E – Public comments received after preparation of the Planning Commission staff report.
- F – Resolution of approval for SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation
- G – Resolution of approval for SP202200015 Woodridge Solar Project
- H – Resolution of approval for SE202200035 Woodridge Solar - Critical Slopes Special Exception